

# SOCIAL RESEARCH

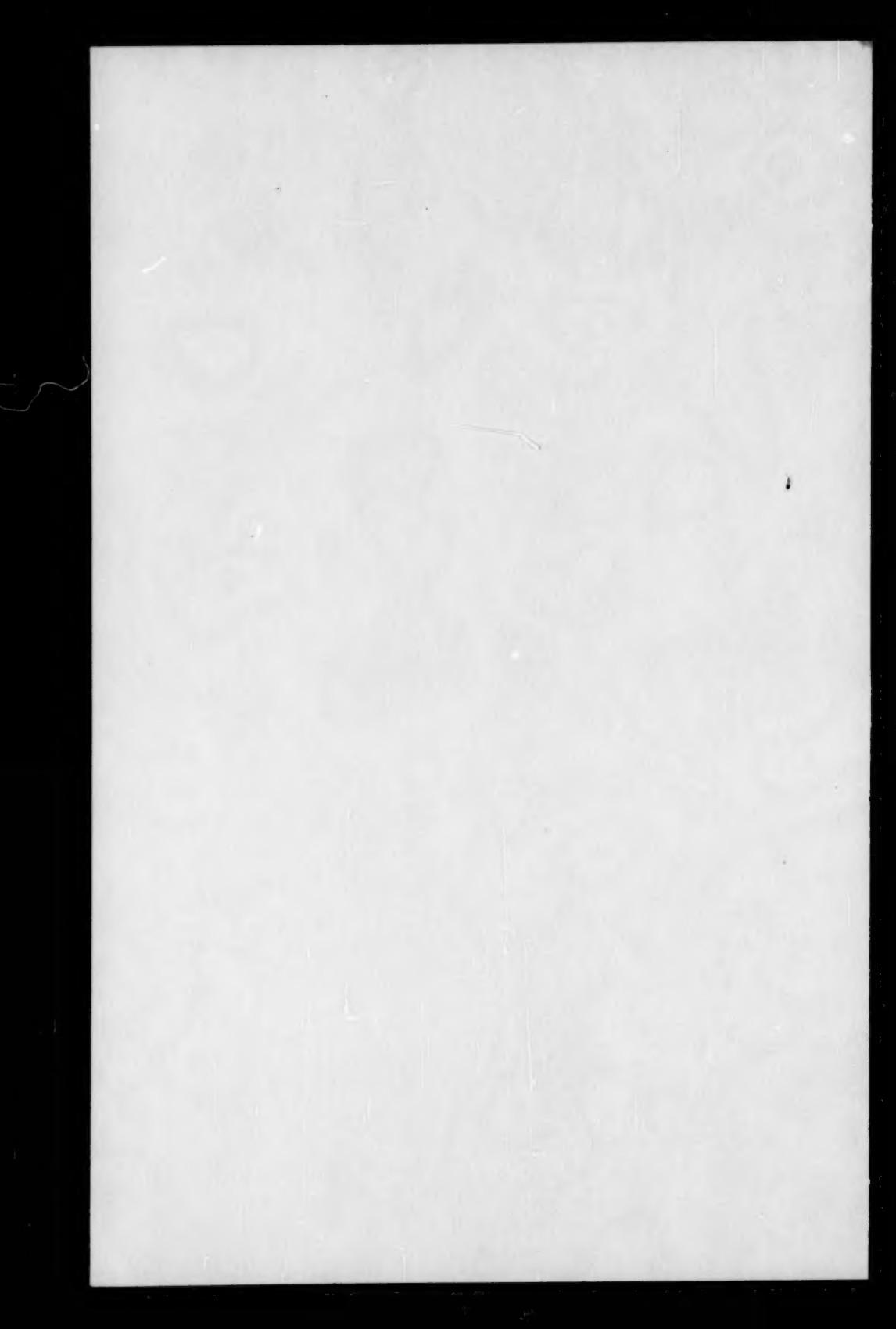
## AN INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

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# Social Research

AN INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY  
OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

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# THE PROCESSED VOTER AND THE NEW POLITICAL SCIENCE

BY HOWARD B. WHITE

**I**N RECENT political campaigns our press has been full of discussion of something new in American politics: the ancient arts of the politician linked with the supposedly improved methods of market research, public-opinion polling, up-to-date advertising campaigns, and all the devices of skilled manipulation by which the voters may be treated as commodities. What Rosser Reeves is reported to have said in 1952, that he looked upon the voter in a booth as he did upon a man who was trying to choose between two brands of toothpaste, has been transformed into the assumption not so much that the voter chooses between commodities but that he himself is a commodity, to be packaged and processed and stored away until inventories are counted on election day. Commodities, of course, do not choose; they are chosen. And while the press is not really blunt and clear about what is new in present-day campaigns, it seems that it is the processed voter, the voter who does not choose but is chosen.

The thesis of this paper is that if the voter is being processed, as I believe he is, part of the responsibility can be fixed. Whatever is really new in the development of manipulation leading up to present campaigns is, in large measure, the responsibility of our academic people, from professors in graduate political-science departments to teachers of elementary social studies. They are responsible because they have indoctrinated their students with a political science that is either "value-free" or guided by a "value relativism."

## I

People have always known that there is a process called "engineering consent," though it did not always have that name. Kurt

Riezler found illustrations of it in Homer and Thucydides.<sup>1</sup> And certainly the old machine politician in this country had as good a file of the voters in his district as the high-priced expert of the present is likely to have. Measures that interfere with the process of rational choice, whatever their form, are part of the history of choice. There is nothing new about them.

Yet some of the ways we do these things are new. Public-opinion polls are new. The old-style poll, or "straw vote," suffered a disastrous defeat in 1936. The new-style poll suffered a decisive defeat in 1948, but the defeat was not disastrous. Armed with the prestige of science, the poll recovered from its 1948 defeat and went on to new triumphs. What Rosser Reeves and the rest of Bates and Co. did for the Eisenhower campaigns and what Whitaker and Baxter did for various California candidates are too well known to require elaboration. Whether or not these people brought their candidates a single vote, they have become some of the professionals of politics. They are not only respectable; they are believed to be indispensable, and, with them, the schools that made them. Gone is the scorn that George Washington Plunkitt once poured on professors. Get yourselves an empirical political science, with its minute analysis of voting behavior, and you can prove that the contribution of scholars to our political life, like that of advertising men, is a momentous one. The gap between the party and the scholar has narrowed. The gap between the scholar and the citizen has widened.

Certainly the widening of the gap is not wholly attributable to political science. There are many scholars who would hesitate to engineer anyone's consent, or to teach manipulation. But the point remains that the techniques developed in the schools furnish new helps to manipulation outside the schools. On August 19, 1960, the *New York Times* published an account of a TV class for politicians. They were told how to dress, how to sit, how to read from a teleprompter without appearing to do so, how to

<sup>1</sup> Kurt Riezler, "Political Decisions in Modern Society," in *Ethics*, vol. 64 (January 1954) Part II, pp. 8 ff.

look sincere. There is nothing so terribly new about that either. Bacon recommended the "demure abasing of the eye," and our schools and colleges have continuously taught public speaking, with all the rhetorical tricks.

Yet the ancient writers on rhetoric, like Aristotle, Cicero, Quintillian, did not see rhetoric in quite that way. Aristotle regarded rhetoric as a useful help to the natural tendency of truth and justice to prevail over their opposites. To Cicero, the beauty of eloquence came from knowledge, and no man could be an orator without comprehensive knowledge. Quintillian's definition of rhetoric was one, he said, that only a good man could adopt. To teach anyone to "look sincere" would be unthinkable to these men. There is something less than ennobling in a reputable newspaper's writing about a class in demagoguery as if it were the most natural thing in the world. This was not, it is true, a college class. It does not follow that there are no college classes. When colleges studied politics in 1900, they did not study how to influence, control, or manipulate. In 1955, Stanley Kelley reports, there were "at least 267 schools teaching public relations."<sup>2</sup> In matters of value, a value-free curriculum finds the teaching of appearance as legitimate as the teaching of reality.

It is possible for the citizen and for the politician to resist manipulation, just as it has been in the past. It is only more difficult today. One reason is that in practical politics the new expert is more likely than the old-fashioned boss to interfere in matters of policy. The old professionals controlled chiefly in personnel, not in policy.<sup>3</sup> With the new professionals it is often quite different. We know too little, so far, of the extent of their success in affecting policy. We do know<sup>4</sup> that the Democratic Party had a hard time in enlisting Madison Avenue firms to work for them

<sup>2</sup> Stanley Kelley, Jr., *Professional Public Relations and Political Power* (Baltimore 1956) p. 26, attributed to *Fortune* (November 1955).

<sup>3</sup> See, among others, Allan Nevins, *Grover Cleveland, A Study in Courage* (New York 1948) pp. 497-98, and Josephus Daniels, *Life of Woodrow Wilson* (Chicago 1924) pp. 97-98.

<sup>4</sup> W. H. Hale in *Reporter*, September 6, 1956.

in 1956. We know that when Whittaker and Baxter accepted a campaign-management assignment they insisted on a "centralized determination of issues" (Kelley, p. 47). We know that Walter E. Quigley was hired to defeat Wheeler in Montana, and concentrated on the charge that Wheeler had attacked the Russians; four years later, Quigley was hired to defeat Thomas in Utah, and concentrated on the charge that Thomas had praised the Russians.<sup>5</sup> It was not Quigley who changed American opinion about the Russians in so short a time, but it would seem that he was not reluctant to help if he could.

Such men do not run for office. They are not officers, they are not necessarily members, of the parties they are aiding. Yet they are at least trying to play a dominant role in determining the issues. If they succeed, and there is some reason to believe that their star is rising, they can be a far more dangerous force than the old-style political boss was. The Theodore Roosevelts and the Clevelands scorned the old professionals. In the new-style campaign the parties seem eager to compete for the new professionals. If this trend is to be modified, political science has a responsibility not to be a mere tool in the hands of those who happen to want to run for office.

In general, the techniques of engineering consent have become more refined. Polling is an allegedly scientific way of determining public opinion. It gained great prestige in academic circles because of its relation to empirical political science, a political science that prided itself on being "value-free." One critic, Peter H. Rossi, seeking "the first noteworthy attempt to connect quantitative research on voting behavior with more general social science problems," cited the 1928 work of Stuart A. Rice on *Quantitative Methods in Politics*; the primary purpose of that work, we are told,<sup>6</sup> was "to present the case for an empirical, value-free political

<sup>5</sup> Frank H. Jonas, "The Art of Political Dynamiting," in *Western Political Quarterly*, vol. 10 (June 1957) pp. 374-91.

<sup>6</sup> Peter H. Rossi, "Four Landmarks in Voting Research," in E. Burdick and A. J. Brodbeck, *American Voting Behavior* (Glencoe, Ill., 1959) pp. 6-7, 8-9.

science." Burdick and Brodbeck the editors of the volume in which this analysis of Rice and other scholars appears, recommend Rossi's essay for a comprehension of "the 'scientific culture' which sought to remove the study of voting behavior from the armchair speculators and place it with the hardworking empiricists" (p. 2). Empiricists, in other words, introduced scientific polling. Their virtue is that they are "hardworking" and that their speculation is not in armchairs. Whether it is peripatetic or couch-ridden is not clear.

The virtues of the empiricists are closely correlated with the virtues of the politicians who use their material. One author of a political textbook divides his discussion of campaign research into academic election research and the research techniques for campaign management, stating in regard to the latter that while it has a biased goal, the greater the objectivity "the sounder will be the foundation of data on which intelligent campaign decisions can be reached."<sup>7</sup> In other words, the more campaign research resembles academic research, the sounder it will be in terms of management and manipulation.

The extent to which both sides have accepted the affinity of practical campaign management and academic, or empirical, research into politics is astonishing. Seldom have two armies accepted each other with such welcoming banners as those waved by professors and politicians. In its graduate catalogue a well known university lists its offerings in one area of political science—and the first area listed—as dealing with "political parties, pressure groups, legislatures, voting, and generally, the engineering of consent." Another well known university announces a graduate course dealing with organizations, including how to "capture an organization." The trend is not confined to political science. A "science of electioneering," we are told, is "one of the social-engineering sciences," and it can be helped by the "most highly developed social-engineering science," that is, psychotherapy.<sup>8</sup> All

<sup>7</sup> Ivan Hinderaker, *Party Politics* (New York 1956) p. 521.

<sup>8</sup> Arthur J. Brodbeck, "The Principles of Permanence and Change: Electioneering

of us academic people are eager to help the partisans. We hang the shingle on our door and wait for the politicians to beat a pathway to us.

At a recent panel of the American Political Science Association, former Republican National Chairman Meade Alcorn reported on the fact that letters had been sent to many members of the Association, enclosing cards listing the functions they might perform. One function they could check was that of speech-writing. Alcorn was very proud of the replies he received. No one on the panel had the effrontery, and no one in the audience had the opportunity, to point out to Alcorn that the best campaigns are those in which the candidates write their own speeches, that no one ever checked a card affirming his willingness to write speeches for Abraham Lincoln or Winston Churchill. What kind of neutrality is this, what kind of science, which permits the representative of a party to affirm, unchallenged, his wish that political scientists be partisans, and partisans who might help to engineer consent?

Jon M. Jonkel managed one of the most questionable campaigns of our time, the campaign to defeat Millard Tydings in Maryland and elect John Marshall Butler to the Senate—the campaign that issued the famous composite photograph of Tydings and Earl Browder. Jonkel is reported to have taken courses, in two universities, which, according to Kelley (pp. 141-42, 138-39), "prepared him for political strategy" and "which he hoped would better enable him to execute campaign tactics." Jonkel also spent the first two weeks of the pre-campaign in Maryland preparing a scientific analysis of public opinion. Science became the hand-maiden of distortion. Though it was not the first time, it was this time a special science, one that claimed to surpass an older "armchair" science because it was "empirical" and "value-free."

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and Psychotherapy Compared," in Burdick and Brodbeck (cited above, note 6) pp. 419-20. It should be added, however, that Brodbeck wishes to "reduce patterns of inattention" and therefore irrationality (p. 429).

## II

Naturally, the words "empirical" and "value-free" are not synonymous. The 1954 study called *Voting*, by Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee, is an empirical study, but its last chapter, in which the authors speak of our need for both involvement and indifference (pp. 314-15), is certainly not "value-free." It seems to seek something that is beyond both indifference and involvement, that is, judgment. Yet there is a type of behavioral research that regards both involvement and indifference as objects of manipulation. To establish the responsibility of political science for manipulation, one has to show an affinity between behavioral research, the pride of the new political science, and market research, the condition for scientific processing.

That there is a certain historical relation between them is suggested by Rossi, who claims that Paul Lazarsfeld was first interested in consumer purchases, and only later decided to study Presidential campaigns. Rossi holds (pp. 15-17) that Lazarsfeld started with a buyer-voter analogy, and that that analogy is incorrect—a conclusion shared by the authors of *Voting*, including Paul Lazarsfeld. Those authors suggest that a political preference is less like a consumer's decision than like a "cultural taste" (pp. 310-11). But what is the difference between a consumer's decision and a political or cultural decision? The authors of *Voting* do not spell out the difference, but it is spelled out by Roshwalb, who says that "There is basis for the contention that a voting decision is less *rational* than some buying decisions."<sup>9</sup>

What is in question here is the use of the word "rational." It is not altogether clear that Roshwalb means the same thing that Berelson and his associates mean when they complain that the voters do not reason about their votes as carefully as they reason about purchases. Their complaint is, whether they spell it out or not, a heart-searching question addressed to democracy itself. What Roshwalb means, however, is not that the voting decision

<sup>9</sup> Irving Roshwalb, "The Voting Studies and Consumer Decisions," *ibid.*, p. 151; italics in original.

is less rational than it should be but that it must be less rational than buying decisions because there "the buyer has a pretty good idea of the benefits he will derive from his decision." Roshwalb's narrow definition of rationality is really rather silly. Even the authors of *Voting* seem to fall into a conceptual trap when they say (p. 311) that political preferences and cultural tastes are "characterized more by faith than by conviction and by wishful expectation rather than careful prediction of consequences." If someone prefers Mozart to a commercial jingle, he does not "wishfully expect" anything, except to hear better music.

Of course a political decision takes a risk—but it can be considered irrational only if the voters do not care to consider the object of voting as related to the common good. In such a case it would be the duty of political science to find the rational way. The most significant choices often call for the greater degree of rationality, but, precisely because they are often difficult, we are blinded to that fact. A preference for a Ford or a Plymouth may be a curious personal choice, depending often on how well a family liked the last one. A preference for a yacht over a baby is, I believe, an irrational decision, in most cases, and the family that chooses a yacht simply because the parents do not like babies is an irrational family, just as a family would be which preferred the way of life of the Mau Mau or Murder, Inc., to that of Jesus or Socrates. It goes without saying that the really difficult question—whether to prefer the way of life of Jesus or that of Socrates—would require more than reason, a profound wisdom such as few of us possess. Perhaps no one will ever have it if we are educated to restrict reason to the kind of thing you use to decide whether to spend the extra fifteen cents for imported beer.

If experts are to regard a voting decision as less rational than a consumer's decision, the natural tendency of behavioral research must be to seek ways to make it more rational. One way is to make the political decision better informed. That has been tried, notably in Oregon, but there is no evidence that all our empirical

research has helped this procedure very much. The other, and the easier, way is to make the decision appear more rational. It is exactly here that scientific research joins hands with political manipulation. By studying the weaknesses, the prejudices, in a public, you may convince the public that it is getting just what it wants. That is precisely what "new" men, managerial men, must do, and they must do it with the help of political scientists and other scholars. When professors enlist in campaigns (apart from merely supporting candidates or giving policy advice, which I certainly do not disparage), they may use their skills to furnish the link between academic voting research and campaign research, which we have been discussing, or to implement the latter research by manipulation.

Competition for professors seems to be much in fashion in our elections. If a candidate is suspected of having a bias—against Great Britain or against Catholics or against baymen—a few properly inserted quotations from British or Catholic or baymen sources may help to allay suspicion. Who can furnish such quotations so well as a trained historian? And what historian would be so free to do so as one who has been taught that history, like political science, is "value-free"?

If justice is merely the virtue of one's own value system, there is no moral limitation in the world on the tendency of social scientists to furnish candidates with spurious analogies to Richard the Lion-Hearted and King John, to furnish quotations from Bismarck or Calvin or Cromwell, to be used for those particular audiences where the mention of Bismarck or Calvin or Cromwell may be thought to ring a bell in the mind. There may, of course, be a utilitarian limitation. Too much history may be resented, and someone may urge us to forget about Athens and Carthage and "dig in our own backyard." The polling professors may find, as hardworking empirical scientists, that the "dig in your own backyard" sector of the public holds the balance of power. The polling professors may prevent the quotation-selecting professors

from helping the candidate of their choice. In fact, it is not unreasonable to expect that to happen in a country in which the academic profession, and certainly the study of history, is so much on the defensive.

If justice, however, is something objective, including even something so simple as obedience to law, then political scientists, historians, school civics teachers will regard their function rather as defending the laws than espousing a party. They may take sides, but they will do what political scientists and the others generally did, as far as I know, fifty years ago. They will attack corruption and manipulation. They will state openly and repeatedly that the tendency to choose candidates because they are likely to be elected rather than because they are qualified is a tendency to be deplored. They will regard expressions like "pressure groups," "machines," "bosses" not as value-free but as standing for something that is reprehensible. And they will consider the new managers—at least those public-relations men mentioned by Kelley (p. 234) who are capable of defending inaccurate statistics by saying "Jello isn't very solid either, but they sell a hell of a lot of it"—as no better than the bosses whose positions they are attempting to usurp, in some ways worse.

They will say these things fearlessly, in their publications and in their classrooms. And they will say them knowing very well that the parties will not attend to them. They will say them because it is their function to teach and to guide. Realizing that theirs are voices crying in the wilderness, they will speak in the hope that, among their students and readers, some few will join in the protest, or will be educated to seek to distinguish the man who puts himself before the voters from the man who sees these voters and their votes as commodities, or regards himself as an actor in a repertoire, who tries to give each audience the performance it will applaud. And when the social scientists again say these things there will perhaps be a little less manipulation, as the Mugwumps brought a little less corruption, because they were not worried about being "value-free."

Once teachers spoke about the deplorable practice of choosing candidates rather for victory than for quality, or about the corruption of a machine or what is meant by demagoguery. I have no doubt that many of the things they said were biased, but they honestly tried to speak as partisans of justice. And if there were any bright youngsters who asked the complacent question "Whose justice?" I did not meet them. While we cannot recapture perfectly these childhood experiences, we can read the books of another era. In 1910, when Ostrogorski brought out the revised edition of the American chapters in his work on parties, he wrote that we have to study the extra-constitutional forces in American politics, both because we cannot otherwise understand American politics and because the citizen who is to "propel" the constitutional mechanism will do himself and his country harm if he does not understand the extra-constitutional mechanism as well.<sup>10</sup> There was no snooty question here about "whose constitution?" In effect Ostrogorski studied the seamy side of politics first to understand it, then to moderate it. He was realist enough to know that there are rigged conventions. He was scholar enough to know that that is not a fact to be discussed without evaluation. There is nothing value-free about Ostrogorski's work, and that is one reason it is a classic.

Or let us take Bryce, whose attachment to the American democracy was powerful indeed. Yet he could speak of why the best men do not enter politics, and could refer to the "stumbling blocks and dirt heaps" that professional politicians place in the path of these same best men. Incidentally, one of the reasons Bryce gave for the reluctance of the best men to enter politics was the relative unimportance of the big, interesting political questions, like foreign policy.<sup>11</sup> Today these questions are certainly important, and the modern analyst would have to seek other reasons for the abstinence of the best men, but a value-free political science cannot ask that question. The term "best men" is mean-

<sup>10</sup> M. Y. Ostrogorski, *Democracy and the Party System* (New York 1910) pp. 1-2.

<sup>11</sup> James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth* (New York 1908) vol. 2, pp. 77, 72.

ingless to it. Is it conceivable that when the American Political Science Association chose that same James Bryce as its fourth President, those who ruled the machines of New York and Philadelphia, which he had done so much to attack, sat at his inauguration and participated in the audience discussion?

## III

It is widely held that an earlier political science was not empirical, or was inadequately empirical. An empirical political science seems to demand a heavy concentration on what people do, especially what citizens do. Very often all that citizens do politically is to vote.

In 1950 the Committee on Political Parties of the American Political Science Association issued a report called *Towards a More Responsible Two-Party System*, with recommendations for achieving that end. The members of the committee were scholars who had studied long and widely in this field. What the report meant by responsibility was so close to responsiveness that it might be considered "value-free": people ought to have a party system that will pose the kind of alternatives they consider important and give them a chance to get the alternative they prefer. In other words, the impediments to rational choice can be rectified by purely formal procedures.

The report shows much disturbance over the fact that certain groups in the community, certain states, have more representation than others in the national conventions, as in the electoral college. The committee seems to have had so little doubt that responsible government is responsive government that the report is full of recommendations for more equitable representation of interest groups, for a more disciplined system of membership in parties, for ways to make the party program "generally binding." The report refers to new types of interest groups "built upon large membership" (p. 34). Far from deplored this development, the authors suggest that the skillful political leader of the future will and must use the political machinery of these groups, as well

as more traditional kinds of political organization. Their answer to the implicit objection that this is a mere glorification and solidifying of self-interest is that "large membership groups are inevitably pushed into considerations of all the factors that affect the national well-being" (p. 35). Whether these groups have been made or are likely to be made aware of this inevitability is not discussed. One might also speculate whether members of interest groups, having been taught by political scientists that that is the way men act politically, do not regard their self-interests as endowed with full respectability.

One of the recommendations made by the committee's report is for greater research, which the parties need, we are told, as much as government or business needs research: "Relatively little use has been made by the parties of social survey techniques as a basis for political campaigns. Nor have the parties shown much interest in the study of the social, economic, and psychological factors that influence the results of the election contests. At a time when the discussion of public policy is necessarily becoming the focus of party business, the parties have not yet established research staffs adequately equipped to provide party leaders with technical data and findings grounded in scientific analysis" (p. 31). The last sentence quoted tends to lend an undeserved halo to the other two. Scientific findings on substantive questions will always be helpful in matters of policy—though perhaps they would be better used if they were presented to impartial journals by the academic community, to be discussed openly, or given directly to the policy-maker. Our chief concern here, however, is with the other two sentences. They state quite simply that the parties do not try hard enough to get the data from professors as to what kind of appeal to prejudices and interests will persuade various groups and various regions to vote as the parties wish.

Now, more than a decade later, the claim is widely made that the writers of the report have their demand. Whether or not that demand is justified, it makes no sense to fill university departments with experts on the new techniques of studying political

behavior, or to fill the files of foundations with requests for grants to study this behavior, and then turn around and deplore Madison Avenue. Pendleton Herring, in his *Politics of Democracy*, wrote in 1940 that "in comparison with commercial advertising the politician in this country has not taken advantage of these more subtle ways of manipulating public opinion" (p. 259). Herring did not urge the politician to use the subtler (and therefore more insidious) ways; he even said that whether such refinements were desirable was open to question. But if he saw that such ways are available, did he not see that men who want to win, and only to win, will take them up? Herring was wary of that outcome, but he did not answer the question. Nor does the report I have been discussing. That report has been widely criticized, yet scarcely on this score. It spoke of the abuses of the past. Without willing so, it helped to prepare for the abuses of the future.

Perhaps the problem can be seen a little more clearly if we look at what a democratic political campaign demands, or once demanded. It is something like what the Greeks called *thumos*, the spirited part of the soul. If there really was a time, as in old New England, when people did not propose their own candidacies, but waited to be chosen by their admirers, that time has passed. Men have to accept the rough and tumble of partisan politics. The spirited, not the reluctant, must rule, because Presidential candidates have to believe that they have a right to do what they are doing.

The story is told that, during one of his Presidential campaigns, Woodrow Wilson was asked by reporters to get his speech in early, just once, because there was a World Series on, and he would have a hard time competing for the available wires. Wilson is reported to have become indignant, as Wilson could, and to have replied that it might seem presumptuous of him to run for President during a World Series, but to him it seemed even more important. It is doubtful that any Presidential candidate today would dare to make such a retort, even if he wished to. But one thing Wilson, who enjoyed competitive sport, demanded: the

importance of what he was doing. If he was not one of the reluctant, he was, emphatically, of the spirited, and he took his candidacy seriously.

In 1956 there was a concerted party effort to place political "spots" at the end of "top entertainment shows."<sup>12</sup> The spirited, in this case, were Arthur Godfrey and Jackie Gleason. The candidates were "hitchhikers." It would never have occurred to Wilson, I fancy, to insert a word or two in the midst of an account of the big game. That, in effect, is what modern candidates do. They are not perturbed that people prefer Larry Sherry's relief pitching to their own efforts. If the rule of the reluctant gave way to the rule of the spirited, both of them having some sense of the significance of public office, there is very real evidence that the rule of the spirited is giving way to the rule of the manipulative, for whom public office is purely a matter of chance.

It seems to me that there is altogether too little concern with the forms of rule, and relatively too much concern with purely formal changes in the party structure, intended to assure that each vote will be counted, or that platforms will represent real alternatives. Political scientists, unduly concerned with matters like improper representation (such as too few votes for urban areas), run the risk of missing the more important problem of manipulation. To see the reality of manipulation, as distinguished from the reality of improper representation, one would have to face the possibility that what makes a liberal democracy wholesome is not so much equitable representation as wise and virtuous representation.

John Morley, *On Compromise*, wrote in 1874 that "what is important is the mind and attitude, not of the ordinary man, but of those who should be sought among those who lead or ought to lead. The test of the health of a people is to be found in the utterances of those who are its spokesmen, and in the actions of those whom it accepts or chooses to be its chiefs. We have to look to the magnitude of the issues and the height of the interests which

<sup>12</sup> W. H. Hale in *Reporter*, September 6, 1956, p. 19.

engage its foremost spirits. What are the best men in the country striving for? And is the struggle pursued intrepidly and with a sense of its size and amplitude, or with creeping foot and blinking eye?" (1886 ed., p. 9). The question was one of grave concern to some of the best political thinkers of the nineteenth century, and before, to Tocqueville and Bryce, as well as to Morley. To say that this is not the question discussed by the writers of the American Political Science Association report is not to say they were not concerned with it. Their problem was a different one: the provision for the electorate of "a proper range of choice between alternatives of action." One has a right to ask, however, why they were concerned with the second question rather than the first.

If values are merely the preferences of the voters, then a social science that seeks to direct means to accepted goals, but not to discuss those goals, necessarily seeks merely that the citizens have a choice between values, or have one chance of expressing their own values. There is not much chance of a value-free political science discussing how the voter finds the extraordinary man, or how society educates him—unless, of course, there is some plebiscite showing that the people have as their goal the search for the extraordinary man, and will the political scientist please help them reach that goal. But is that not, in fact, what people want? Is not every honest vote, however ill informed or biased or irrational, a part of the search for the extraordinary man? And does not political science, limiting itself to a goal it supposes identical with the democratic process, free choice, and the means to that goal, sidestep a problem that may be as much a part of the democratic process, and more significant as well as more urgent: the problem of wise choice?

Considerations of wise choice are implicit in all considerations of keeping information channels open or of paying for increasingly expensive campaigns, but they are less likely to be tackled directly. It is hard to be neutral about them, and it is hard to make recommendations that do not in some way affect the relation

between wisdom and freedom. Yet we must reflect on how we got where we are, on what it is that makes it difficult for political scientists to do the kind of work they ought to do in connection with the American Presidential election.

## IV

The most important social scientist in the evolution of value-free science is generally considered to be Max Weber. Weber did not deny that a professor may introduce value judgments into a classroom, provided he sharply distinguish empirically proved facts from personal evaluations.<sup>13</sup> It must be abundantly clear, however, that this distinction must have practical consequences, both for social science and for the evaluations. What those consequences are, in the practices of American political scientists with reference to an election, whether those practices represent accurate interpretations of Weber's thought, is our problem here. While stating that the social sciences are strictly empirical, and should not pretend to help a person avoid making a choice of his own, Weber granted that "we" can help personal choices by determining "the consequences which the application of means to be used will produce in addition to the eventual attainment of the proposed end. . . . Thus we can answer the question: what will the attainment of a desired end 'cost' in terms of the predictable loss of other values."<sup>14</sup> That is done, of course, but usually with regard to a specific piece of legislation. The problem here is whether it may not be done with regard to value-free political science. Let us ask what that costs. With Weber's sanction, let us consider the price the American electorate has to pay for value-free political science, in terms of "the predictable loss of other values."

The first price we have to pay is independence. By that I mean the independence of the scholar from the narrowing and corrupt-

<sup>13</sup> Max Weber, *Methodology of the Social Sciences*, tr. and ed. by Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (Chicago 1949) pp. 1 ff.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*; compare p. 19 with p. 53. See also Arnold Brecht, *Political Theory* (Princeton 1959) pp. 221–31; Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago 1953) Chapter 2.

ing influences of partisanship. In the mind of George Washington Plunkitt, the Tammany "philosopher," there was no doubt that we were independent.<sup>15</sup> To him, those who opposed corruption, the spoils system, and the thesis that the principal object of the political life is the bestowal of rewards on those who do not deserve them were the members of the academic profession. Civil-service reform grew out of a "college professor's nightmare" (p. 120). Plunkitt scorns, as susceptible of obvious answer, the question why reform administrations do not succeed themselves, a question, he says, that "college professors and philosophers who go up in a balloon to think are always discussin'" (p. 22). And Plunkitt finds that those who have studied with these foolish professors will find their education a hindrance in politics; they must "unlearn" what they learned (p. 33). How many times this argument has been used against any attempt to raise the level of the academic life! Anyone who reads these statements, and there are quite a few others in the book (pp. 10, 13, 34, 60, 65, 73, 109), will see that beneath Plunkitt's scorn there was a very real fear. His ungrammatical charm and apparent frankness should not blind us to the fact that he and his way of life were at tension with the things academic people were doing. The politics of the machine politician, as Ostrogorski, Plunkitt's contemporary, noted, was "not that of . . . Columbia College." Have they come a trifle closer together?

If so, we have paid some of the price in independence. Scholars had reason to be proud of the part they played in the reform movement. Certainly some of them overrated its effects. Yet, as they related education to reform, they related their role as scholars to their role as political actors. Since the chain that unites scholarship and action is the chain that unites ends and means, we cannot expect good (virtuous) politics from the absence of evaluation, even though we cannot guarantee it from the presence of evaluation. Riordan prefaced his Plunkitt volume with a tribute paid to

<sup>15</sup> William L. Riordan, *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall* (New York 1905, reprinted 1948).

Plunkitt by the Tammany leader Charles F. Murphy, who praised him for his regularity and for his failure to indulge in cant and hypocrisy. Those to whom politics is essentially a matter of self-interest are likely to attribute cant and hypocrisy to the people who do not speak of self-interest. Quite possibly the accusers believe and want to believe that the accusations are correct, for the interested are seldom so callous but that they would like to be morally superior to the disinterested. When Murphy says such things, perhaps it does not matter too much. When a famous formulation by Lasswell, "Politics is the study of who gets what, when, and how,"<sup>16</sup> is held in high esteem in the academic world, apparently because it is considered a neutral and nonpartisan conception of politics, it matters a great deal. It is hard then to see that a value-free political science can counsel any higher goal than self-interest. If it cannot counsel a higher goal, it cannot be truly free, and it cannot guide.

Thus guidance is the second price we have to pay. If a scholar dedicates his life to the disinterested study of politics, he ought to furnish guidance, including guidance as to goals. A compass is not to serve or to enlist. It points to the north, and those follow it who want to go or have the courage to go to the north. Whether anyone follows it or not, it keeps on pointing, unless it gets too close to a mass of iron. Value-free political scientists run the risk of getting too close to the mass of iron. In the political battle they will no longer be a compass.

That political science generally does not guide could be considered not alone the fault of the representatives of the new political science; equally blamable, it might be said, is the growth of modern mass communication, with its consequent lowering of level. It is a fair criticism. To be sure, there will be lists of professors for one candidate and professors for another, though because of value-free political science they can offer little more than partisan endorsement. This, however, can be better furnished by others, for there will also be lists of celebrities for one and

<sup>16</sup> Harold D. Lasswell, *World Politics and Personal Insecurity* (Chicago 1934) p. 3.

celebrities for another, and the celebrities will certainly be more important, because more people will have heard of them. It would be interesting to ask when the popular practice of getting endorsement from "names" began. I am sure that, fifty or sixty years ago, I should almost rather have seen Julia Marlowe play Rosalind than have a talk with James Bryce. I am also sure that Bryce, Wilson, and Lowell did not consider it their civic obligation to make endorsements, side by side with Julia Marlowe, Ty Cobb, or the creator of the Gibson girl. The Gallup poll of cross-sections is accompanied by the Gallup poll of celebrities. If ultimate standards are our personal affairs, why not?

Apart, however, from endorsements, the scholar does something the celebrity does not do. He furnishes the candidate with manipulative information. Plunkitt said that Tammany had a few "bookworms"; they were kept as ornaments. The leaders, on the other hand, had common sense. One Johnnie Ahearn had a district half Irish, half Jewish. "He eats corned beef and kosher meat," said Plunkitt, "with equal nonchalance" (pp. 60-65). Today, if Ahearn could persuade one of those scorned "bookworms" to support him, the "bookworm" would tell him just how the Irish vote and the Jewish vote were likely to go in his district, and find other, newer, subtler ways of influencing that vote than his flexible and nonchalant dining habits. The "bookworms" would become respectable by following, not by guiding.

The third price is high-level speech. It is difficult to examine this contention as fully as we ought. On the whole, the level of campaign speech is lowered from time to time in two ways: by vilification or by distraction. It is the latter, a more passive distortion, that is the stock in trade of the new professionals, though Jonkel and Quigley both employed more active forms of distortion. The "spots" furnish less positively objectionable campaign devices, yet, in their distortion, they are also contributors to lowering the level of communication. What earthly civic purpose is served by the exchange: "What about the high cost of living?" "My wife worries about the same thing. I tell her it's our job to

change that on Election Day." It should not be difficult for political-science professors and committees to recommend legislation that would demand a minimal length for political broadcasts and telecasts, on the ground that an appeal to reason in less than fifteen minutes is likely to be spurious. Means of improving the level of content may not be so readily recommended. One reason is that "spots" depend for much of their effectiveness on the kind of political-behavior research that is done in the universities, even though they did not originate there. Another reason is that such a recommendation would interfere with freedom of speech. But surely the emptiness of such speech as I have quoted may serve to destroy the very process of speech itself.

A fourth price we have to pay is not easy to name. We might call it distinctiveness, the distinctiveness of the academic profession in general and of political science in particular. The distinctive role that science has played in society has traditionally compelled it to justify itself to laymen. As long as the community of scholars was small, and had learned from the experience of Socrates, it could live and defend itself in the face of popular distaste. Its distinctive role was not always, however, a popular role, and, with the rise of modern science, it had to protect itself by its utility. Bacon saw that. He saw that the friars, with their poverty and their good works, had protected the learning of the monks. He saw his own science as issuing in works, and therefore demanding not so much a small community of scholars as a veritable New Model Army of modern scientists. He knew that science would hardly support so many men in "idleness" unless their science issued in works, the worth of which was clear to all, or at least was held to be desirable by all.

Truly it is not the task of the academic community to be unduly stirred by the manly virtues, whether fighting or fixing. Ridicule of our profession, the ridicule of Plunkitt, has been the badge of our distinctiveness. It has been a testament to the highest kind of nonconformity, which refuses to take its values from the tides of politics and society, but tries to take them from reason and

contemplation. Ridicule for an alleged unmanliness, the kind of ridicule the schoolmaster confronted on the frontier, is, as Plato's Socrates said of the ridicule of the people of Athens, "perhaps of no consequence." It is of considerable consequence, however, if we are to become so intent on our manliness and our usefulness that we are unable to concern ourselves with what is truly good.

A fifth price is civic responsibility. This price is so close to several of the others that I need not develop it in detail. One point, I believe, will suffice to show what I mean. A political science that is value-free demands, nonetheless, a public with values. It insists on and, generally speaking, it has concentrated on the widest possible political participation. There are exceptions, like the study on *Voting*, but non-voting is usually regarded as a negative or indifferent attitude. It was not always so. Ostrogorski suggested (p. 222) that the method of "protesting by silence against abuses is not uncommon, and sometimes is a serious blow to those against whom it is directed." Bryce held that "scratching" is a good plan when you want to frighten a ring, though only when you do not have the alternative of another ticket (vol. 2, p. 178). A measure usually associated with lethargy may be a real registry of protest. If a campaign is really one of manipulation, in which nothing that is said or done can possibly reach the voter with more than images, and the candidates remain unknown persons, dressed up by specialists in dressing up, abstention may be the only way to return the elections to the people, though only, of course, in the long run. Today, in tending to spurn abstention because it is "negative" or "lethargic" or downright "undemocratic," we deny political science one of its special tasks, its civic responsibility to help the citizen choose between abstention and supineness.

A sixth price is toughness. However hardworking empiricists may be, and I have no doubt they are, to contrast them, as Burdick and Brodbeck do, with "armchair speculators" suggests that the latter must be lethargic or lazy. It may take as much time to inquire how people vote as to inquire how they ought to vote;

it may take more. But it is conceptually much easier. The simple fact is that value-free political science is comfortable. And because it demands a comfortable escape from considerations of the nature of the good, it is easy, far easier than the tough old political science that was not afraid to ask the hard questions.

Finally, a seventh price we have to pay is objectivity. It is not easy to show that a value-guided political science results in a greater objectivity than a value-free political science. The possibility is entirely contrary to the expectations of the great scholars who tried to make social science value-free and at the same time objective. I am not even certain that it is necessarily so. But it seems to be so in our situation. It seems that professors, once freed of the burden of making judgments, have felt more free to be partisan. They have found it easier to divorce their role as citizens from their role as scientists. The question that was of such grave concern to Tocqueville and Bryce—whether the best men enter politics, and why—is a problem in political science. If you deny the validity of the question, you are free to choose whom you like, even in terms not of who should be but who is likely to be nominated and elected. In that case you may easily become the servant of a party. If the question of the good man is irrelevant, you may choose the liberal or the conservative man, move from one camp to another in the light of electoral expectations, offer expert advice on how to get this or that vote, and try to persuade others that appearance is reality. All this can be done in the interests of partisanship, not science.

It may seem that I started out with the problem of the price the American electorate pays for this new political science and am ending up with what the scholar pays. I think it amounts to the same thing, though sometimes remotely. There have always been scholars who were not objective, but highly partisan, scholars who were not independent and furnished no guidance. A case can be made for the thesis that value-free political science arose in response to this distortion of scholarship. Our problem is whether it creates, in turn, a distortion of its own.

To recapitulate, there is nothing new in manipulated opinion and engineered consent, in ordinary men dressed up like extraordinary men, as cooks dress up ordinary fish, or rhetors dress up ordinary speeches. Even the sheer bulk of distortion is not altogether new, merely more refined. What is new is the acceptability, the mere taken-for-grantedness of these things. Men of the highest integrity seem to regard political distortion as the most natural thing in the world. Men of unassailable dignity separate their private lives from their professional ones, and do not consider it their scholarly responsibility to cry "shame" at the presence of ignoble lies. Yet that is what we must cry. And I believe that the American Political Science Association will resume its traditional independence and its guiding role when that cry of "shame" at what the experts are often doing reverberates in the halls of its conventions, and grows from its present whisper to a resounding echo in the colleges and universities. Otherwise we shall pay a price for value-free political science, and the price will be too high.

# THE QUALITY OF MERCY\*

*On the Role of Clemency in the Apparatus of Justice*

BY OTTO KIRCHHEIMER

IN IMPOSING sentence on a convicted prisoner a court must somehow tie together the requirements of society—as expressed in codes and rules regarding expected behavior, and behind these in official and unofficial pressures—with the experience it has had with the man in the dock. The court may gauge society's requirements incorrectly, and it may misinterpret the record chalked up against the defendant, but it cannot just shove aside either of them. In granting clemency, however, the powerholder is not necessarily subject to these considerations. He may indeed be influenced by the requirements of society, but clemency is not intrinsically, as is a judicial procedure, an instrument for serving the public interest. And while his decision may be affected by actions of the prisoner, it also may be wholly unrelated to the affairs of the prospective beneficiary. Moreover, the prisoner, once the offense is entered into the books against him, finds his chance of self-determination considerably lessened, his physical movements and outside contacts almost completely subject to the control of others; he may still retain some means of influencing those who hold sway over him, but the efficacy of these means is uncertain and their price may be prohibitive. In short, clemency, unlike judicial procedures, contains elements of both arbitrariness and purposefulness.

What role does this aspect of power perform in the apparatus of justice? Does it, despite its place outside the established instruments of control, serve a function in the social order? In particu-

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lar, what is its role in the area of political offenses against the very authority that has the power of decision? I propose to approach these questions first by way of illustration.

## I

The history of clemency probably knows few rencontres so ironic and symbolic as one that occurred in the spring of 1921, bringing together Harry Daugherty, who was President Harding's Attorney General, political mentor, and man Friday, and Eugene Debs, symbol of the last homegrown variety of American socialism. At that moment Debs was serving a ten-year sentence in Atlanta Federal Penitentiary for having sustained in his Canton, Ohio, speech of June 18, 1918, the cause of those who were deemed to have obstructed recruiting for the World War I effort. His conviction had been upheld by a unanimous Supreme Court opinion,<sup>1</sup> rendered by Justice Holmes. Somehow that opinion failed to go beyond putting Debs' demeanor and remarks into the framework of the incitement-to-insubordination provision of the June 1917 Espionage Act; it refrained from testing the facts of the case against Holmes' own "clear and present danger" doctrine, enunciated a few months earlier.<sup>2</sup>

Holmes' private correspondence suggests that he had some doubts about the case.<sup>3</sup> He considered the decision justifiable, both in terms of the constitutionality of this provision of the Espionage Act and with regard to the circumstances of wartime society. But he questioned the wisdom of the prosecution, and gave an impression that Oliver Wendell Holmes as juror might have reached different conclusions from those of Mr. Justice Holmes. To his mind—somewhat disturbed by a series of political prosecutions carried on after the business of war to which they were related had come to an end—the results of the conviction,

<sup>1</sup> *Debs v. United States*, 249 U.S. 211 (1919).

<sup>2</sup> *Schenck v. United States*, 249 U.S. 47 (1919).

<sup>3</sup> See Mark de Wolfe Howe, ed., *Holmes-Pollock Letters*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, Mass., 1941) pp. 7, 11, 15, and *Holmes-Laski Letters* (Cambridge, Mass., 1953) pp. 190, 203.

though it had passed both the sieve of a wartime jury and the patriotic reflexes of the higher courts, were not compatible with the changed requirements of the postwar situation. In fact, he felt that the discrepancy called for a Presidential pardon "for a lot of poor devils that it was my misfortune to have to write opinions condemning."

But fulfilment of this desire, shared by small but vocal minorities<sup>4</sup> and by many outstanding individuals not necessarily in sympathy with Debs' cause, found no favor with Woodrow Wilson, the incumbent President. Doubly removed from the calculus of political benefit and loss—by ingrained stubbornness and by the approaching end of his political career—he would not even retrospectively forgive the sins of those who had resisted his policies. Thus the decision on what to do with the Atlanta prisoner and Socialist Presidential candidate—whose million votes at the 1920 election had betokened him as a faint beacon or, according to others, a picayune nuisance, but scarcely a danger to the realm—devolved on the incoming President and, at his behest, on his confidant, Harry Daugherty.

The tale of the personal rencontre of the Attorney General and the prisoner of Atlanta hailed into his office was twice told by Daugherty himself:<sup>5</sup> once in his report to the President, recommending Debs' release by commutation of his sentence, as of December 31, 1921; and once in his memoirs. The first and contemporary version, even if probably not entirely Daugherty's brain-child, has a greater ring of authenticity than the mentored

<sup>4</sup> As for the majority, "the great mass of plain people in all such melodramatic affairs are almost unanimously on the side of the prosecution": H. L. Mencken, in *A Carnival of Buncombe*, ed. by Malcolm Moss (Baltimore 1956) entry for October 18, 1920, p. 26.

<sup>5</sup> Letter from the Attorney General to the President, "Application for Pardon of Eugene V. Debs," Senate Document No. 113, 67th Congress, 2nd Session, 1922; Harry M. Daugherty, in collaboration with Thomas Dixon, *The Inside Story of the Harding Tragedy* (New York 1932) pp. 115, 121. Debs himself, having made a promise of silence to the prison warden, has not left an account of his conversation with Daugherty; see McAllister Coleman, *Eugene Debs, A Man Unaframed* (New York 1930) p. 324.

autobiography of a decade later. There the note of condescending and at the same time chivalrous benevolence for the valiant but errant soul was overplayed to reflect a kind of posthumous credit on Attorney General Daugherty, otherwise known to his contemporaries only through the disrepute he brought to his office.

At the time of their meeting, April 19, 1921, Daugherty and his chief, Harding, had already publicly taken the position that there could be no distinction between political and genuine crime,<sup>6</sup> a theorem that Daugherty reiterated in his report to the President. However ironical this position must look when taken by a Daugherty, at the time it was propounded it aggravated the job of searching for a rationale under which to release Debs. The latter did little to help Daugherty toward formulating favorable conclusions resting on the customary basis that the prisoner understood and sincerely repented his previous wrongdoing. Few political prisoners have the imagination and intelligence of Michael Bakunin, who put his 1851 "confession" for Nicholas I in terms allowing the czar to dwell on the indubitably common ground between them—Slav patriotism and contempt of things German—thus not only contriving a stratagem for advancing his own case but maintaining even in abject submission some semblance of a political position.<sup>7</sup> In contrast, Debs' exposition of his doctrine and basis of political action drove Daugherty—who was highly impressed by the prisoner's dignified demeanor—to the exasperated conclusion, revealing the honest incomprehension of a total stranger to the world of ideas and convictions, that "So far as he thinks correctly he might be conscientious, but he does not think correctly and apparently cannot do so on the questions involved in his case."

What then to do with a man who thinks incorrectly and on whose "principles no thinking man would set up a government"? Gathering together the reasons why a commutation of sentence

<sup>6</sup> H. M. Daugherty, "Respect for the Law," in *American Bar Association Journal*, vol. 7 (1921) pp. 505, 508-09.

<sup>7</sup> See Bakunin, *Confessions*, translated by Paulette Brupbacher (Paris 1932).

(not a full pardon restoring civil rights) should be granted, Daugherty enumerated the obvious—Debs' apparently selfless personality, his exemplary conduct in prison, the repeal of the section under which he had been convicted, his advanced age and weakened health, the excessiveness of the sentence in terms of his life expectancy—but could not get away from the conviction that an act of clemency would not restore the recipient to what he had never been, a good citizen and patriot. Nevertheless, the conviction that neither imprisonment nor clemency could reform Debs seemed in the final analysis less important to Daugherty than the fact that many others thought his punishment unjustifiable. Thus from the admittedly scant effect of imprisonment on the prisoner the scene shifts to its possible adverse effects on others. Daugherty's accurate perception of the degree of momentary pressures in favor of Eugene Debs' release can be rationalized as what theorists would call a kind of application-in-reverse of the doctrine of criminal law's general preventive function—in other words, as a belief that enforcement would fail to have beneficial effects on potential offenders.

Of course, the Debs film could be, and in other less publicized instances has been, played backward. Instead of emphasizing failure to convince others as an argument for clemency, an advocate could invoke the need to overawe potential enemies in the face of threatening political situations as an argument to justify the opposite course, a refusal or delaying of pardon.<sup>8</sup> One can see in the rencontre between Daugherty and Debs just one of the endless absurdities of history, or one can savor the deeper irony: a Daugherty given a chance to be himself remembered, because for the better part of a day he constituted a sort of captive and somehow also captivated audience for Eugene Debs. Afterward he took care of the matter with the politician's knack, releasing Debs in a manner nicely calculated to balance the expectations

<sup>8</sup> See the discussion and the material in William Preston, "The Ideology and Technique of Repression, 1903-1933," in *American Radicals*, ed. by Harvey Goldberg (New York 1957).

of Debs' specialized constituency against the requirements of the official credo.

To further illustrate the ways of clemency I turn next to Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*. Isabella comes to Angelo, deputy of the absent Duke, to plead mercy for her brother Claudio, who has been sentenced to die for fornication, an offense punishable under an enactment that has long gone unenforced. To Angelo's statement that her brother is "a forfeit of the law" she replies: "Why, all the souls that were were forfeit once; and He that might the vantage best have took found out the remedy. How would you be if He, which is the top of judgment, should but judge you as you are? O, think on that; and mercy then will breathe within your lips, like man new-made" (II, 2). Angelo is known as a man of probity. As the Duke has earlier said of him, "Lord Angelo is precise; stands at a guard with envy; scarce confesses that his blood flows, or that his appetite is more to bread than stone" (I, 4). But he falls victim to Isabella's beauty and eventually comes round to asking her: "Which had you rather,—that the most just law now took your brother's life; or, to redeem him give up your body to such sweet uncleanness as she that he hath stain'd?" (II, 4).

For Angelo, clemency to Claudio is a mere means for satisfying his lust; he will refrain from exercising lawful authority if in exchange Isabella grants her favor. But Isabella has a different, more highminded understanding of clemency: "Ignominy in ransom and free pardon are of two houses; lawful mercy is nothing akin to foul redemption" (II, 4). Of what nature is the clemency ultimately extended by the Duke in his triple grant of mercy?

As for the ruffian Barnardine, even his availability as an object of clemency is "an accident that Heaven provides." His head, to have been lost anyway for cause "most manifest, and not denied by himself," was going to be used for a necessary project, but in the last minute is replaced by a more suitable one, which has become available through natural causes. In this instance, clemency is

a product of fortuity, derived from the same roots as the mediæval practice of rescinding capital punishment if an attempt to carry through an execution has miscarried.<sup>9</sup> Another element in the decision is the Duke's pronouncement: "Thou'rt condemn'd: But, for those earthly faults, I quit them all, and pray thee take this mercy to provide for better times to come" (v, 1). This is an affirmation of the sovereign's right to grant clemency without furnishing an explanation why it has been exercised in the particular instance.

The Duke's determination to effect Claudio's release from Angelo's harsh sentence is fully motivated. Isabella, when pleading with Angelo for Claudio's life, put it in the following vein: "Who is it that hath died for this offence? There's many have committed it" (ii, 2). It is a dubious argument for forestalling conviction; yet, conforming to what natural-law theory called "intrinsic"<sup>10</sup> cause for clemency, it carries cogency in any clemency proceedings.

There remains the most problematic case, clemency for Angelo, of whom the Duke himself says: "Being criminal, in double violation of sacred chastity and of promise-breach thereon dependent, for your brother's life,—the very mercy of the law cries out most audible, even from his proper tongue, an Angelo for Claudio, death for death" (v, 1). Nevertheless, and even though she believes her brother dead, Isabella asks clemency for Angelo. She tries to cloak his proposed clemency-chastity deal, fulfilled not by herself but by Mariana, in a legal formula: "His act did not o'ertake his bad intent, and must be buried but as an intent that perish'd by the way: thoughts are no subjects; intents but merely thoughts" (v, 1). But this construction, which ignores Angelo's

<sup>9</sup> See the historical account in the Attorney General's *Survey of Release Procedures*, vol. 3 on Pardon (Washington 1939) pp. 16, 42. Modern American usage does not honor this custom, though it could well be rationalized by reference to the Eighth Amendment's provision against cruel and unusual punishment. See *Francis v. Resweber*, 329 U.S. 459 (1947).

<sup>10</sup> "Instrinseca cum si non injusta dura tamen est poena ad factum comparata": Grotius, *De jure belli*, note, bk. II, ch. xx, 25.

intent to renege on the deal and have Claudio killed despite it, does not exculpate Angelo for his abuse of office, and it is waved away by the Duke with a curt "Your suit's unprofitable."

Is the Duke moved, then, by the loyalty of Mariana, once affianced to Angelo and now wed to him on the Duke's orders? Or does he find reason for clemency in Angelo's remorse: "I am sorry that such sorrow I procure: and so deep sticks it in my penitent heart that I crave death more willingly than mercy; 'tis my deserving, and I do entreat it" (v, 1). The two latter grounds for clemency—hope and repentance—may be both probable and intrinsic causes in natural-law doctrine,<sup>11</sup> but they remain slender reeds to build on. Finally, is the Duke's reasoning based on the degree of apparent, but only apparent, symmetry between Angelo's case and that of Claudio?

What looks like a plethora of possible explanations is in reality much closer to the opposite. Clemency to Barnardine may be styled merely the caprice of the prince, which in confirming the outcome of an accidental constellation gives a new lease on life to the riotous underdog. But clemency to Angelo corresponds to what Hegel called *die grundlose Gnade*.<sup>12</sup> It is a clemency untouched by any bond to the particular circumstances of either benefactor or beneficiary. It appears as a humble recognition of the universality of human abjectness and the infinite possibilities for redemption. Unrelated to ulterior motives, it proceeds from the Duke's all-embracing, all-forgiving mercy.

In this respect the clemency granted Angelo is in line with Portia's admonition "The quality of mercy is not strain'd; it droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven." Yet in *The Merchant of Venice* the focus of clemency is somewhat different. Clemency appears here as remedy for imperfections of the legal system itself. As Portia says to Shylock: "Of a strange nature is the suit you follow: yet in such rule, that the Venetian law cannot impugn you as you do proceed" (iv, 1). If performance of the bond is impos-

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, bk. II, ch. xx, 24 and 26.

<sup>12</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of Law*, addendum 173 to par. 282.

sible, no alternative legal remedy or substitution is at hand. Therefore clemency would serve the function of a safety valve for justice, correcting structural inadequacies of the judicial process, or unjust individual results that it might lead to.<sup>13</sup>

## II

What are the implications of these examples for our central problem: the function of clemency in a social order? What is the use of chalking up good against evil, establishing a balance sheet and shuffling around accounts until a small positive balance appears? Is clemency to be regarded merely as an antidote to the meaninglessness of earthly existence in general? In implying as much, Shakespeare stands on the shoulders of St. Augustine, with his concept of grace. To St. Augustine, God's freedom signifies a choice to select for salvation whomever He deems fit, and the Christian's belief in salvation—in *gratia cooperans*—thus constitutes no more than a precondition for his receiving it.

Whether or not we accept this interpretation of clemency, it must be granted that the powerholder's position in the process of extending clemency is problematic. Who is the guarantor of his disinterestedness, and where lie the limits of his justifiable interest? Josef Kohler, child of the benign second half of the nineteenth century, pays his respects to Hegel in viewing clemency as the intellectual feat through which the powerholder ennobles the highest aims of culture.<sup>14</sup> Still, he knows quite well that this premise holds true only if the regent is able to avoid the temptations of private interest and concentrates on "the holiest concern of law and social order."

Over the stretches of history, clemency has taken many forms and served many purposes. The philanthropy exercised by the

<sup>13</sup> That the safety-valve and corrective function of mercy—as stressed for example by Jhering, in *Zweck im Recht*, 3rd ed., vol. 1 (1916) p. 333—is only one component of clemency is emphasized by Radbruch, who has produced far the best and most succinct discussion of this issue; see his *Rechtsphilosophie*, 5th ed. (Stuttgart 1956) pp. 276 and 337.

<sup>14</sup> Josef Kohler, *Shakespeare vor dem Forum der Jurisprudenz*, 2nd ed. (Berlin 1919) p. 178.

Hellenic ruler and the well advertised *clementia* of the Roman emperor were products of civilizations that made for a rapid alternation of cruelty and civility, of calculating schemes and boundless liberality—thus differing from the practices in earlier Greek and Roman periods, when the course of the legal order was allowed to suffer few interruptions, and then only, as a rule, for weighty political reasons. In many periods, however, there has been an undercurrent of magical, religious, or even social usages, existing outside the plans and schemes of major power-holders. These usages sometimes functioned without a mediator, as when the criminal's ostentatiously chance encounter with a vestal virgin or a cardinal was sufficient to cause his release. In other instances the extramural usages entailed active intercession: a condemned man might be saved through the good offices of a virgin who was willing to marry him, or, in a somewhat less active form of intervention, through the word of an ecclesiastical dignitary or a nobleman, whose office or family had inherited a privilege of interceding with the local authorities for the release of convicted criminals. Many a poor and hungry vagrant, but also some more dangerous, more politically tinged malefactors, thus escaped the hangman. This *bon plaisir* of those who had but small control over man or mind, but were still able to play providence, served as an antidote to a brutal and haphazard exercise of power; as a rule it disappeared when power became centralized.<sup>15</sup>

Does the transition from the deified personality of antiquity's ruler to the Christian prince, styled to be dependent on the grace and benevolence of God, connote a new departure in the exercise and usages of clemency?<sup>16</sup> The point is at best arguable. Francis Bacon tried hard to find a principle of statecraft in Henry VII's lottery-like alternation of pardons and executions; but even for him Henry's practice remained at best in the nature of an *arcane*

<sup>15</sup> See the account in Heinrich Gwinner, *Der Einfluss des Standes im gemeinen Strafrecht* (Breslau 1934) pp. 150-58, 247-59.

<sup>16</sup> See the interesting though inconclusive discussion in Wilhelm Grewe, *Gnade und Recht* (Hamburg 1936) pp. 81-96.

*imperii.* When Henry chose clemency it was always calculated to turn to his own advantage, be it through the ostentatious showing of his feeling of security, the filling of his exchequer, or, as with his last, general pardon, the expectation of "a securer coronation in a better kingdom."<sup>17</sup>

Theological and constitutional reactions against the Augustinian-Jansenist concept of grace and the corresponding unchecked privilege of the sovereign in granting clemency are but expressions of one and the same phenomenon: a middle-class quest for certainty. In the eighteenth century this quest was characterized by the rationalism of the Enlightenment. A clemency prerogative construed after the Jansenist concept—with God as the free dispenser of grace, owed to nobody and distributed with sovereign independence—became inadmissible. In contrast, Jesuit doctrine in the eighteenth century construed God's grace as a calculable reward owed by God. Under the criticism of Filangieri, Beccaria, and Kant, clemency became outmoded. What Montesquieu still regarded as the "most beautiful attribute" of the prince's sovereignty became with Kant, half a century later, the "most slippery of all rights of sovereignty."<sup>18</sup> For the dangers of the sovereign's benevolence the certainty of a good and wise law was to be substituted. In Beccaria's choice between the "noble prerogative" and the perfect legislation, with its "mild punishments and regular and expeditious proceedings," victory easily went to the omniscient law.<sup>19</sup> The French Criminal Code of 1791 did away with the practice of clemency.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> See Bacon's *History of the Reign of Henry VII*, in *Works*, ed. by Spedding, Ellis, and Heath, vol. 11, pp. 274-75, 347; also Howard B. White, "The English Solomon: Francis Bacon on Henry VII," in *Social Research*, vol. 24, no. 4 (Winter 1957) pp. 457-81.

<sup>18</sup> Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois*, bk. vi, 5; Kant, *Metaphysische Anfangsgrunde der Rechtslehre*, II, 1 E II.

<sup>19</sup> Beccaria, *Dei delitti e delle pene*, ch. 26.

<sup>20</sup> Part 1, title VII, art. 7. The argument in the Constituent Assembly, which was mainly concerned with curtailing the king's prerogatives, rested on clemency's character as an individual dispensation outside the general law; see *Archives Parlementaires*, vol. 36, pp. 736-38.

But the rationalist illusion that an omniscient legislator could instruct and enlighten the judge enough to avoid any need for further consideration of the case did not survive the emergence of Napoleon. Since then it has been agreed that a procedure for the granting of clemency is necessary. And even at that time, it might be added, Jeremy Bentham, while sharing the illusions of his age and calling clemency a "veritable betrayal of trust," regarded pardon in the marginal political field—our main interest here—as a necessary part of the legal system.<sup>21</sup>

To be sure, there has been intermittent struggle as to the ultimate location of the pardoning power, with the results of the conflict mirrored in changing constitutional allocations. Some European countries assign to the legislature the business of general amnesties for whole categories of crimes or defendants; for the granting of individual pardons they oscillate between a number of solutions, ranging from assigning this power as a prerogative of the head of state, to be exercised in the constitutionally prescribed form, to putting it at the disposal of parliamentary majorities. A dubious intermediate solution is to put the right of pardon exclusively at the disposal of the judiciary, thereby equipping with a political prerogative the members of an organization outside the circuit of any political responsibility.<sup>22</sup> Anglo-American usage, while its history has not been free of jealousies and disputes between King or President and parliament—witness Andrew Johnson's bout with Congress—has now settled both individual and general pardons in the hands of the executive. But whatever the changing allocation principles, the need for an instrument with

<sup>21</sup> Bentham, *Theory of Legislation*, vol. 2 (London 1914) p. 171.

<sup>22</sup> An example of the most destructive exercise of such a judicial fiat was the 1924 release of Adolf Hitler after he had spent six months of his five-year sentence; see Karl Schwend, *Bayern zwischen Monarchie und Diktatur* (Munich 1954) pp. 292–302. The French Fourth Republic associated the President with the Council of the Judiciary in the exercise of clemency. In spite of the difficulties that arose in regard to the ministerial countersignature and the share of the Ministry of Justice, this practice amounted to a balancing of judicial and political influence. The Fifth Republic (see Article 65 of the Constitution) returns the prerogative to the President, leaving the Council of the Judiciary only the right to be heard.

which to correct the actions of courts has never been doubted since the rationalist intermezzo of the Enlightenment.

Usually society makes the premature release of its prisoners dependent on their contrition, involving both good conduct while under detention and insight into the illicit character of the act. In a mass society like ours, however, conditional release has often become a general and fairly standardized procedure, both for economizing official efforts and, more important, for preserving some means of effective post-release control over the prisoner's activities (conditional release as used here differs from the release provided by "good-conduct laws," which give the prisoner a statutory right to have a certain part of his sentence set aside for good conduct while serving it, irrespective of his beliefs and probable future extramural activities). This practice serves to give clemency the qualitatively different aspect of a generalized legislative policy, making it a built-in part of the sentencing system and somehow akin to the mediaeval judging by mercy. Correspondingly, contrition becomes formalized too—reduced to an absence of trouble-making while serving the sentence, with the sum total of post-release expectations calculated from a parole chart.

### III

The granting of clemency to political prisoners is especially enmeshed in cross-currents. The parole chart may show the prisoner as one of the best overall risks for cooperative existence; yet in the one point the state is most vitally interested in—his willingness to refrain from opposing the present political system and from working in the direction of its destruction—the authorities are not likely to get much cooperation. It may even be that the prisoner himself is not willing—except at best under the strongest mental reservations—to sign the official papers and petitions needed to put clemency proceedings into motion.<sup>23</sup> Thus

<sup>23</sup> See the exhaustive discussion and material on a 1933 German case in Richard Scheringer, *Das grosse Los unter Soldaten, Bauern und Rebellen* (Hamburg 1959) pp. 279-85, especially the letter of General von Reichenau to Scheringer, suggesting

in 1856 Napoleon III offered repatriation to the left-wing republicans-in-exile on the condition that they petition the government and recognize the established regime; his 1859 amnesty omitted even the need for an application, excluding only Ledru-Rollin, styled a common criminal. Nevertheless some of the outstanding political figures, among them Louis Blanc and Victor Hugo, refused to avail themselves of the offer, instead waiting another decade for the fall of the regime. In short, the regime's foes may want to avoid anything that could even remotely be interpreted as recognition of the present powerholders' title for proceeding against them. In the minds of such prisoners, capture and consequent imprisonment or exile connote purely physical events, without any greater dignity or justification. As Barbès put it when appearing before the French Senate after the unsuccessful revolt of 1839: "If the Indian is vanquished, if the accident of war delivers him into the hands of his enemies, he will not venture to defend himself with empty words, but offer his head to be scalped."<sup>24</sup>

Those in power, if unable to obtain their foes' submission, may well tend to exhaust all the punitive possibilities opened up by the judicial sentence.<sup>25</sup> For such tendencies there are many and possibly contradictory motivations, including moral indignation, a feeling of overwhelming strength, and even a desire to compensate for weakness. Equally often, however, the state authorities have scaled down or even relinquished their claim. They can more easily bring themselves to do this if a formula is available

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a petition for mercy; see also Ralph Chapin, *The Wobbly* (Chicago 1947) p. 322. More than a century earlier, Prince Polignac had similar troubles when deciding whether to accept clemency from the hands of Louis Philippe; see Pierre Robin-Harmel, *Le Prince Jules de Polignac* (Avignon 1950) pp. 191-92.

<sup>24</sup> See Louis Blanc, *Histoire des dix ans*, vol. 5, p. 182.

<sup>25</sup> See, for example, the experience of John Gates, in his *The Story of an American Communist* (New York 1958) p. 139. For recent United States policies in this direction see the Letter to the Editor, "To Free Gold and Sobell," in *New York Times*, February 16, 1960, p. 36; or for a similar Swiss case see the story of Pierre Nicolle as seen from the viewpoint of the Swiss authorities, in *Bundesblatt* (1952) vol. 2, p. 331.

that seems to uphold their freedom. When that self-same Barbès had been sentenced to death for his part in the uprising, there was a considerable amount of pressure on Louis Philippe's government to commute the sentence. Victor Hugo, in a poem dedicated to the memory of the Princess d'Orléans, the King's daughter, tried to put the call for clemency toward Barbès into the conventional framework that had long marked the sovereign's complete discretion in granting clemency, by evoking two major events in the King's family—death and birth:<sup>26</sup>

Pour votre ange envolé ainsi qu'une colombe  
Pour ce royal enfant, doux et frôle roseau  
Grâce encore une fois, grâce au nom de la tombe  
Grâce au nom du berceau.

By evoking both the plenary power of the King and basic reasons for general human compassion, Hugo put in the foreground motivations that could efface any impression that the King was yielding to the clamor of the street.

A ruler may, of course, be beyond caring what impression his action will make. Though Nicholas II of Russia would grant clemency, even full pardons, to members of the Black Hundred, to murderers of Jews or of moderate politicians, in the case of social-revolutionary attackers of military men he saw no cause to arrest the course of the law. And Nicholas' Bolshevik successors, in their early days, had such a small margin of security and cared so little for the meaning of legal forms that they looked on the imposition of a death penalty as a normal object for horse-trading: they were willing to remit the sentence in exchange for pledges of good behavior by the political organization to which the convicted person belonged.<sup>27</sup>

In cases involving political offense this use of the clemency prerogative as an opportunity for making a deal is not infrequent, though the connection between the pardon and its calcu-

<sup>26</sup> See Georges Weill, *Histoire du parti républicain en France* (Paris 1900) p. 175.

<sup>27</sup> See for example the text reprinted in Edward Hallett Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution*, vol. 1 (London 1950) p. 183.

lated effect may be a bit less crude than it was in the hands of the Bolsheviks. De Valera and his Sinn Fein colleagues were beneficiaries of political strategies rather than partners to a deal. After that bloody Easter Sunday in Dublin in 1916 they owed their lives to the fact that the British had found it politic to take into account American political susceptibilities and the considerable number of Irish sympathizers in the United States. And the withholding as well as the granting of clemency can be subject to devious political considerations. In the Haymarket Affair it appears that the governor's final determination, whereby he rejected clemency for five out of seven defendants (among the five one who had signed an attenuated repentance declaration in regard to his group's propaganda pattern), had relatively little to do with either the defendants' repentance or the governor's conviction of their guilt. It was rather a normal political compromise—in a field, though, where the category of compromise has little meaning.<sup>28</sup>

But political purpose is not always or exclusively the controlling factor in extending clemency. While Lincoln never lost sight of the need to reestablish the Union in the hearts of his foes, this consideration alone does not explain the pattern of his clemency practice, either toward those sentenced by the civil courts on treason charges or toward those in the clutches of courts-martial. From the viewpoint of the proximate effect on military operations, Sherman's quip that forty or fifty executions now would save thousands of lives in the next twelve months may have had an element of reasonableness, however conjectural. Yet Lincoln lived in a world in which clemency was not yet a matter of channels, triple-space memos, and stereotype briefings by pardon attorneys and staffers mouthing the conventional phrases. For him it was a very personal decision, under the burden of which he suffered considerable anguish. He handled it according to his own deep-seated feelings of the value of human life, with a consciousness of

<sup>28</sup> See Henry David, *The History of the Haymarket Affair*, 2nd ed. (New York 1958), especially p. 457.

both the contingent nature of all political decisions and the duty he owed to his office and the nation.<sup>29</sup>

The decision on the granting of clemency, however lonely it may ultimately be, is subject to manifold pressures. And the more the clemency-dispenser is in the thick of the political fight, the greater the pressure he may be exposed to in regard to the exercise of this prerogative. In August 1932 the bestial National Socialist murderers of Potempa beat to death a helpless political foe of theirs—a curtain-raiser for things to come—and were sentenced to death for their deed. Chancellor von Papen, acting in his capacity as Reich commissioner for Prussia, may have had a number of strong moral, legal, and political reasons against having the sentences carried out; but in commuting them into life terms after Hitler had chosen the disposition of this case as a battle-ground between himself and the authorities, Papen created the impression of having yielded to the most insolent type of pressure.<sup>30</sup>

Often the pressure on public authorities can be expected to work in reverse. Especially when it is exerted by an organized propaganda machine, many governments will refuse to exercise the right to grant clemency—as did President Vincent Auriol, for example, on the occasion of the campaign for the release of the communist naval officer Henri Martin, convicted to long-term penal servitude for incitement to sabotage on a man-of-war.<sup>31</sup> In such cases it is quite immaterial to the propagandists whether

<sup>29</sup> See J. T. Dorris, "President Lincoln's Clemency," in *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, vol. 20 (1927–28) pp. 547–68; also Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years*, vol. 4 (New York 1939) p. 132. Especially relevant in this connection is Lincoln's handling of the 313 Minnesota Indians convicted to death by court-martial (*ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 614); he personally reviewed the case history of every individual concerned, reprieving all but 38. For an inkling of contemporary practices see Frank Reel, *The Case of General Yamashita* (Chicago 1949) ch. 35; even if Mr. Reel's literary gifts are fully taken into consideration, the comparison remains painful.

<sup>30</sup> See Paul Kluge, "Der Fall Potempa," in *Vierteljahrsshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 5 (1957) pp. 278–97, and, more recent, Gerhard Schulz, in Bracher/Sauer/Schulz, *Die Nationalsozialistische Machtergreifung* (Colone 1960) p. 522, note 29.

<sup>31</sup> *L'Affaire Henri Martin* (Paris 1953) p. 220.

clemency is granted. If the offender is released, this action, irrespective of its circumstances, is ascribed to irresistible popular action; if clemency is refused, the very refusal is made the pivotal point of a continuing and stepped-up campaign. Whatever the powerholder's reaction to such pressure—whether he yields or resists—he has fallen victim to a trial of strength between the state authority and its foes. An interesting case of this kind occurred in April 1957, when the West German authorities, after having refused to accede to a demand for a general political amnesty, released the Communist Youth functionary Jupp Angerforth, then serving a five-year penal-servitude sentence—a punishment that was out of line with both the type of penalties and the length of sentences usually meted out to communist functionaries in the Federal Republic. Communist propaganda represented the release as an important victory, though in reality it was a well calculated measure, motivated by a desire to underscore the continuing reasonableness and humanity of the government's policy in political prosecutions.

A government itself may exert pressure in regard to clemency, offering this boon as a reward for service rendered. The convicted person, especially if sentenced to death, may in extremis be willing to turn informer, even though he refused to do so before. The manifest danger of his service lies in the possibility that in his anxiety to please he may make assertions whose interest for the government does not equal their accuracy.<sup>32</sup> The judgment of contemporaries and that of posterity may vary in regard to the prisoner's helpfulness. Yet powerholders, whose vital interests may be at stake, cannot be blamed if they take advantage of such a situation, especially if they only respond to the prisoner's initiative rather than eliciting the information by advances of their own.

There is, however, an inherent limitation to the proper exercise of the clemency prerogative. If it is one of the functions of clemency to correct and efface shortcomings of the judicial process, the

<sup>32</sup> See the story of the Preston pardon by William III in 1691, as narrated by Macaulay in his *History of England*, vol. 4, ch. 17.

reverse procedure—that of using the expectation of clemency as lure for a post-conviction confession that would shore up a problematic judgment—contradicts the very essence of both clemency and justice. Post-conviction confession is not a proper prerequisite for the commutation of a death sentence.<sup>32</sup>

It was made one, however, in the Rosenberg case. The widely publicized fact that a wire from the White House to the death cells was kept open at all times was formally an invitation to inform on accomplices, but it logically implied an invitation to confession on the part of defendants who had so far been completely recalcitrant. It reflected the official desire to strengthen by a confession a conviction that essentially rested on circumstantial evidence and on testimony by a highly interested accomplice witness. While the state had a legitimate interest in finding out about accomplices, this interest, given the particular circumstances of the case, should have yielded to the necessity to defend the integrity of the judicial process.

If the administration shared the disquiet of the few who believed that the basis of the conviction itself was debatable, either in law or in fact, or of the many who entertained serious doubts about the decisive assumptions that entered the sentencing process (the factual basis of which was known, even when sentence was passed, to be purely conjectural), then a commutation of the sentence was indicated.<sup>33</sup> Such a course would have been indicated in spite of the fact that the extent of the pro-Rosenberg campaign and the resultant counter-campaigns made dispassionate consideration of the case especially difficult. On the other hand, if the administration neither shared these doubts as to judgment or sentence, nor believed clemency to be an indicated policy toward those who had forsaken national allegiance, it might have proceeded without obfuscation, on the basis of the jury's and the judge's action. But one course emphatically should not have been taken: suggesting to the defendants that as a condition sine qua non for commutation

<sup>32</sup> For a concise review of the most important problems see the book review by William H. Mann in *Yale Law Review*, vol. 67 (1958) p. 528.

of the sentence they confirm the assumption on which the verdict rested. Not only was this a tactical mistake, which settled once and for all the stature of the Rosenbergs as authentic martyrs, but it devaluated the finality of the judicial process, by turning the possibility of clemency into a device for obtaining confirmation of what by definition should neither need nor—except as specified by the law itself—accede to further confirmation: the final verdict of the jury and the sentence of the judge.

This case also illustrates once more clemency's unavoidable dialectics. Clemency is deeply immersed in the substructure of politics, its campaigns and strategies, its assumptions and symbols. But at the same time it provides the possibility of transcending the configurations of the day and introducing a touch of subjectivity into the rational rule whereby we attempt to govern human relations. Such an element of subjectivity, distasteful as it may be to theorists, is considered necessary by many who are left unconvinced by the present performance of humanity. The American Presidency—in the limited but highly significant area where such a question would come under its purview—could perform such a function, acting under the authority of its democratic basis and within the frame of its vast potentialities for functioning both above and within the political arena. At one of its most trying moments the Presidency, as Lincoln demonstrated, found an officer equal to the task.

## DESCARTES' "OLYMPICA"

BY RICHARD KENNINGTON

THE *Olympica*—Descartes' youthful account of dreams and their interpretations—is believed to be the one writing in which “the founder of modern rationalism” claims a divine inspiration for his philosophy. According to Gilson, “at least at the time of the *Olympica*, he places a certain inspiration at the origin of philosophy, a point to which Descartes never returned, neither to reaffirm it, nor to deny it.” The “inspiration” in question is divine: “the sentiment experienced by Descartes that he was invested by God with the mission of constituting the body of the sciences and thus, as a consequence, to establish true wisdom.”<sup>1</sup> The *Olympica* should therefore offer the strongest support of any Cartesian writing for the twentieth-century revision in the interpretation of Descartes. One is not facetious but merely precise in describing this revision as asserting that the reputed “founder of modern rationalism” was not himself a rationalist. The revision, inaugurated by Gilson's distinguished study of 1913, first fully presented by Gouhier, more recently described by Mme. Lewis, and constituting the central theme of Laporte,<sup>2</sup> is now almost generally taken for granted.

Of the manifold questions raised by this revision, the present essay limits itself to one cardinal point: its rejection of the widespread eighteenth and nineteenth century view that Descartes regarded unaided human reason as the sole authority for all opinion and belief whatever, including religious belief. The older

<sup>1</sup> Descartes, *Discours de la méthode, Texte et Commentaire*, ed. by E. Gilson (Paris 1925) pp. 125, 158. References to the *Discours* are to this edition; references to other writings of Descartes are to the Adam-Tannery edition (A-T), *Oeuvres de Descartes*, 12 vols. (Paris 1897-1910).

<sup>2</sup> E. Gilson, *La liberté chez Descartes et la théologie* (Paris 1913); H. Gouhier, *La pensée religieuse de Descartes* (Paris 1924) pp. 4-20; G. Lewis, “Bilan de cinquante ans d'études cartésiennes,” in *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger* (1951) p. 249; J. Laporte, *Le rationalisme de Descartes* (Paris 1950).

"rationalist" view (as Gouhier described it), of which Adam supplied perhaps the last comprehensive statement,<sup>3</sup> had taken at face value statements like "Finally, whether we are awake, or whether we sleep, we ought never to let ourselves be persuaded except by the evidence of our reason" (*Discours*, p. 39). That Descartes often contradicted this and similar statements, explicitly and implicitly, was of course well known; but the rationalist historians did not succeed in overcoming such contradictions in a coherent interpretation. Apparently liberated from the difficulties that perplexed the rationalists, the historians of our time generally seek to resolve those contradictions by denying that reason was the unique authority for Descartes in the sense mentioned. He rejected, they contend, not scholasticism as a whole, but only or especially its philosophic or Aristotelian element; he was at one with the Biblical faith of Thomas and scholasticism. It is in essential dependence on this recent "Descartes research in France" that a German historian can now write "in reality the whole modern metaphysic derives from Christianity."<sup>4</sup>

## I

No historian has ever—to my knowledge—offered a detailed interpretation of the *Olympica*, yet it is a primary source for the question of the rationalism of Descartes. It contains the first Cartesian references to "revelation and enthusiasm," to "the evil spirit" and "God" and a relation between them, to "the church," to the "Spirit" of Descartes; and it offers as well a eulogy of poetry and imagination as superior to philosophy and reason. The original was headed by the phrases "November 10, 1619, completely

<sup>3</sup> Regarding Descartes' first provisional moral rule (especially "to obey the laws and customs of my country, retaining constantly the religion in which God has given me the grace to be instructed from my childhood"), C. Adam observes (A-T XII, p. 57): "his protestations of respect with regard to the religion of his country, entirely sincere as they are, should not impose on us. At that time, the most inclined to skepticism, in word and in thought, showed themselves, in their actions, Christians and Catholics as all the world, and the skeptic philosophy that a Charron or a La Mothe le Vayer, for example, will teach will be a 'Christian' skepticism."

<sup>4</sup> W. Schulz, *Der Gott der neuzeitlichen Metaphysik* (Pfullingen 1957) pp. 11, 55.

filled with enthusiasm, having discovered the foundations of the miraculous science etc." (A-T x, p. 179). Its date and its marvelous discovery link it with the day spent in the *poèle* in the winter of 1619 during which, according to the internal dates of the *Discours*, Descartes discovered the foundations of his method. The *Olympica* thus offers the advantage of the "contemporary witness" of its author to the origins of Cartesianism; on the other hand, the *Discours*, of 1637, is the only account, if a retrospective one, which Descartes ever published of those origins. Are the two accounts in accord? Neither the historians who, like Maritain, speak of the *Olympica* as showing the divinely inspired or revealed character of those origins, according to its author, nor those who speak of it as evidencing "a mystical crisis"<sup>5</sup> have succeeded in reconciling the *Olympica* with the *Discours*, which is admittedly silent regarding both these types of origin.

Moreover, the judgments of all historians are almost exclusively based on the third dream and Descartes' interpretations thereof. They scarcely discuss, and they by no means explain, the relation of the preceding two dreams to the culminating one: they have not attempted to see the *Olympica* as a whole. It is even more striking that they ignore the remarkable fact that Descartes offered an interpretation of the third dream while still asleep, and then offered a waking interpretation that revises and even contradicts the sleeping one. In the latter, which contains the eulogy of poetry, Descartes understands the *Corpus poetarum* as "philosophy and wisdom joined together"; but in the waking interpretation he understands it as "revelation and enthusiasm." One runs a certain risk in ignoring the distinctions between sleeping, dreaming, and waking, not least in the understanding of Descartes. The historians do not observe that he distinguishes between "dreams" and "visions"; they have left the pagan title

<sup>5</sup> J. Maritain, *The Dream of Descartes* (New York 1944) p. 15; C. Adam, A-T xii, p. 49; G. Milhaud, *Descartes savant* (Paris 1921) Ch. 2. Maritain writes that Descartes took the third dream as a "revelation bearing upon the future," but "revelation" does not appear in Descartes' opinion of the bearing of the third dream on the future, as will be seen below.

without clarification; they speak of some one divine inspiration or revelation, whereas some five superhuman beings or agencies enter the *Olympica* account at critically different points, requiring discrimination and comparison. The *Olympica* therefore remains a mystery lying at the origins of modern philosophy.

The literary status of the *Olympica* by no means precludes detailed study. The original, comprising three dreams that presumably occurred during the night of November 10, 1619, and their author's interpretations, was never published by Descartes; perhaps unfinished, it was found among his posthumous papers, but is not now known to exist. In his *Vie de Descartes* (1691) Baillet gave a French summary some seven pages in length of a Latin manuscript twelve pages long. Hence it is not necessarily the case that Baillet abbreviated the original. In any event, his summary (quoted complete in A-T x, pp. 179-88) "includes circumstances so particular and details so singular that he does not seem to have invented anything" (editors' remark, A-T x, p. 175). Baillet speaks of a single manuscript, but he also says there was "little order and connection in what comprised these *Olympics* among the manuscripts" (A-T x, p. 188). His straightforward and coherent summary can hardly fail to have come from a single original manuscript: it contains, and proceeds beyond, the last interpretation of dreams; the interpretations consider no detail not given in the dreams; and the dreams contain almost no detail not considered in the interpretations. The *Olympica* therefore constitutes a whole, if only a whole that was perhaps planned as preface or part of a larger work. From the analysis below it appears, moreover, that it was not intended merely as a private record.

An acceptable procedure of interpretation is needed to overcome the peculiar literary character of the *Olympica* as an account of dreams. There can be no disagreement with the assumption that we must in the first instance have recourse to Descartes' own stated interpretations: we must first understand his dreams exactly as he understood them himself, and postpone any twentieth-

century "symbolic" interpretations until we learn if they are necessary or useful. As Maritain says (p. 14), "The interpretation [by Descartes] obviously merits much greater attention than the dream itself." But Descartes offered three kinds of interpretations: a waking reflection or interpretation after each dream; a sleeping interpretation preceding the waking one of the third dream; and a reinterpretation of the first two dreams which augments and modifies preceding ones.

Following Descartes, if not "good sense" as well, I shall in what follows permit waking interpretations to supersede sleeping ones, and the reinterpretations to qualify earlier ones. This procedure is especially demanded by one apparently unnoticed feature: whereas human beings appear in two dreams, none of the super-human beings or agencies occur in dreams or sleep, but only in Descartes' waking interpretations. This feature will prove indispensable to the clarification of the title, which is never mentioned within the work. "*Olympica*" must refer to the sacred mountain of the pagan gods, or more precisely to the pagan gods or things of that mountain. The title is nevertheless obscure, since no conspicuously pagan divinity is mentioned, but only a pagan poet and a pagan philosopher.

Led by Descartes' own interpretations we can quickly see the immediate evidence for the intelligibility of the *Olympica*: the three dreams possess a structure. Two frightful ("terrifying") dreams or nightmares, a long then a short, were followed by a culminating, peaceful third: the final prophetic dream contained nothing not "most sweet" and "most agreeable." The *Olympica* has therefore the character of an ascent. The clue to the possibility of ascent should lie at the juncture of the fearful dreams and the calm prophetic one, that is, in the waking interpretation following the second dream. Precisely here Descartes first mentions "philosophy" or "reasons taken from philosophy": he begins to philosophize.

Further remarks will be based on Baillet's summary. Its whole text (in my translation) is presented here, divided into parts.

## II

FIRST DREAM. "He informs us [in margin: CART. OLYMP. init. ms.] that, on the tenth of November 1619, having gone to bed completely filled with enthusiasm and wholly occupied with the thought of having discovered that very day the foundations of the miraculous science, he had three consecutive dreams in a single night that he imagined could only have come from on high. After having gone to sleep, his imagination was struck by the representation of certain phantoms which presented themselves to him, and which frightened him in such a way that, believing that he was walking up the street [in margin: CART. OLYMP.], he was obliged to fall back onto the left side in order to be able to advance to the place where he wished to go, because he felt a great feebleness on the right side, which he could not sustain. Being ashamed of walking in this manner, he made an effort to straighten up; but he felt a violent wind which, carrying him off in a kind of vortex, caused him to spin three or four times on the left foot. This was still not what frightened him. The difficulty which he had in dragging himself along made him believe that he would fall at every step until, perceiving a college open on his way, he entered within in order to find a retreat there, and a remedy for his trouble. He tried to gain the church of the college, where his first thought was to go to make his prayers; but perceiving that he had passed a man of his acquaintance without greeting him, he wished to retrace his steps to be civil to him, and was repelled with violence by the wind which blew against the church. At the same time he saw another person in the middle of the college courtyard who called him by his name in civil and obliging terms, and told him that if he wished to go find Monsieur N., he had something to give him. M. Descartes imagined that this was a melon which had been brought from some foreign country. But what surprised him more was to see that those who gathered with this person, around him in order to converse, were erect and firm on their feet, although he remained bent and wavering on the same terrain, and that the wind which he thought would upset him several times had greatly diminished. He awoke on this imagination, and felt at the time an actual pain, which made him fear that this was the operation of some evil spirit who had wanted to seduce him. He immediately turned over on his right side; for it was on the left that he had gone to

sleep and had had the dream. He prayed to God to ask to be guaranteed from the bad effect of his dream, and to be preserved from all the misfortunes which could threaten him as punishment for his sins, which he recognized could be grave enough to draw down the thunders of heaven [*foudres du ciel*] on his head: although he had led up till then a life sufficiently irreproachable in the eyes of men."

Descartes does not interpret the content of the first dream; this he postpones to his reinterpretation. His comment here is not on the dream but on "an actual pain" felt on waking, apparently on his left side. He deals with the pain in two ways. He first turns over on his right side; and then he begins to think on "the evil spirit" to which he attributes the pain. In this amazing manner the renowned evil spirit, absent from the dream, makes its entrance in Descartes' and therewith modern philosophy. The peculiarity of its debut is that it appears as the conclusion of a leap in inference. As is well known, the *Discours*, with which Descartes made his appearance in public, opens with a fallacy, if a visibly ironic one. In regard to this first dream the fallacy is compound: a bodily pain is somehow attributed to an evil spirit; no connection of pain and dream has been shown, but the "bad effect" of the entire dream is now attributed to the evil spirit. If we plead in Descartes' behalf that a man is not at his best at such moments, we are forced in all consistency to apply this judgment to the meditation and prayer that follow.

Thus faced with an irrational belief in evil spirits on the part of "the founder of modern rationalism," we can only follow his remarks with scrupulous care, hoping that they will disclose signs of his reputed genius. The context of the evil spirit is clearly theological, for the link between the evil spirit and "God" is "his sins": he can be preserved from the evil spirit if God will preserve him from "punishment for his sins." His sins, then, not the evil spirit, are the cause of the first nightmare. This, however, only renders puzzling why the evil spirit deserves his evil name: does he not perform the salutary task of reminding Descartes of his sins? Does he not in effect send Descartes to prayer? Moreover,

Descartes' admission of his sins is not free of ambiguity, for he claims to have led "a life sufficiently irreproachable in the eyes of men." The cause of his first nightmare is in fact, then, his fearful belief in his possible secret sins. This belief no doubt derives from his ultimate assumption or belief in a God who knows one's secret sins.

The distinction here suggested between the knowledge of "men" and that of "God" will prove to adumbrate the problem of the *Olympica*. In this context the *foudres du ciel* he seeks to avoid are a metaphor for divine punishments. In the second dream *foudres du ciel* do in fact befall him, but not in the form of divine punishments.

**SECOND DREAM.** "In this situation he went back to sleep after an interval of almost two hours in various thoughts on the goods and evils of this world. A new dream immediately occurred to him, in which he believed he heard a sharp and piercing sound that he took for a clap of thunder [*un coup de tonnerre*]. The terror it caused awoke him that very moment; and having opened his eyes he saw many sparks [*étincelles*] of fire scattered about the room. The thing had often occurred before, at other times; and it was not especially extraordinary, upon waking in the middle of the night, for his eyes to be so besparkled [*étincelants*] that he saw confusedly the objects closest to him. But on this latter occasion he sought recourse to reasons taken from philosophy; and he drew therefrom conclusions favorable to his mind, after having observed, upon opening and then closing his eyes alternately, the quality of the appearances [*espèces*] represented to him. Thus his terror dissipated, and he went back to sleep in a very great calm."

Unlike the first dream, the fearful character of which is preserved if not enhanced in the subsequent reflection, the second leads not to fear and to prayer but to philosophy and "a very great calm." It is the first turning point of the *Olympica*. We must try to understand why this is the case. For some two hours Descartes has meditated "on the goods and evils of this world," and previously he had prayed to God to preserve him from his fears, or from the *foudres du ciel*, which would justly punish his

secret sins. Nevertheless, he now has another dream characterized by "terror." His second nightmare thus indicates that his prayer to be "preserved from all the misfortunes which could threaten him" has apparently been unfulfilled. Descartes does not, however, renew his prayer: herein is the obscurity of this dream's interpretation, requiring our utmost scrutiny.

"Terror" is caused by "a sharp and piercing sound" that he interprets in the dream as "a clap of thunder." In the later reinterpretation he will refer to the piercing sound as *la foudre*: a *foudre du ciel* has indeed befallen him. (Moreover, the "many sparks of fire," taken with the thunder, suggest lightning, another and familiar meaning of *foudre*.) Just as his reflection on his first dream led to fear of *foudres du ciel*, so *foudres* of a kind occur in the subsequent dream. This connection of his second dream with the preceding reflection is not stated by Descartes. His silence compels us to reflect on its meaning.

In his later reinterpretation of the second dream he is silent with regard to his recourse to philosophy; in his present interpretation he is silent regarding the "remorse of his conscience," which will appear only in the later reinterpretation as the cause of the dream's fearful character. Only by putting together what Descartes has left asunder do we see that the fears of conscience are dissipated by philosophic reasoning, leading to calm. We are forced to wonder whether these silences are deliberate, or, more exactly, whether the *Olympica* is a conscious construction. Whereas he had assigned a cause for his first nightmare, he is silent regarding the cause of the second. He compels us to seek the connection between the preceding fears and *foudres* and those of the second dream, and to trace the latter to the cause made explicit only in the preceding reflection: his fear of divine punishment.

Yet it would be imprecise to speak of the second dream as simply dependent on—a fulfillment of, as it were—his first reflection. The *foudres* that were feared are not identical with those that occur: the feared *foudres* were divine punishments, but those now

experienced are a sound and sights, that is, natural phenomena. We should err in taking this discrepancy simply as a stroke of unconscious wit, for it conceals a serious question: do his fears have a natural origin? Analogously, since the *foudre* is fearful only as interpreted by him while asleep, do his fears originate in himself? What he explicitly reasons about here is the "sparks of fire," finding their delusive character due to the state of his body on waking. Only in the reinterpretation will he enlighten what is here left implicit.

Thus at present we may merely note that all that intervenes between "terror" and "calm," and must therefore be regarded as the sole explanation of the "calm," is Descartes' action in resorting to "reasons taken from philosophy." Hence calm must be the result of discovering the power of reason. The significance of philosophy and the dependence of the next dream on this reflection soon appear: in the third dream philosophy is mentioned during sleep for the first time. We must not exaggerate, however, the scope of Descartes' present turning to philosophy, for the decisive question, "What way of life ought I to follow?" has not yet been asked, and it will be asked within the next dream only by a poet. The posing of the question clearly implies that it is not yet answered; or more precisely, that it has not been answered by the religious beliefs implied in Descartes' fears of divine punishment.

THIRD DREAM. "A moment after, he had a third dream, which had nothing terrifying, as had the first two. In this latter one, he found a book on the table, without knowing who had put it there. He opened it, and seeing that it was a *Dictionary* was delighted with it, in the expectation that it could be most useful to him. In the same instant he discovered another book at hand, which was not less new to him, not knowing where it had come from. He found that it was a collection of poems by different authors, entitled *Corpus poetarum* etc. [in margin: divided into five books, printed at Lyons and at Geneva, etc.]. He had the curiosity to wish to read something: and upon opening the book he fell on the verse 'What way of life ought I to follow?' [Quod

*vitae sectabor iter?].* At the same moment he saw a man he did not know, but who presented to him a piece of verse, beginning with 'Yes and No' [*Est et Non*], and praised it to him as an excellent piece. M. Descartes told him that he knew which it was, and that this piece was among the *Idyllia* of Ausonius, which were found in the large collection of poets on his table. He wished to show it himself to this man, and began to leaf through the volume, of which he claimed to know the order and arrangement perfectly. While he was looking for the place, the man asked him where he had got the book, and M. Descartes replied to him that he could not say how he had; but that a moment previously he had handled still another, which had just disappeared, without knowing who had brought it to him or who had taken it away from him. He had not finished when he again saw the book appear at the other end of the table. But he found that this *Dictionary* was no longer complete, as he had seen it the first time. Meanwhile he came to the poems of Ausonius in the collection of poets that he was leafing through; and not being able to find the piece which began with *Est et Non*, he said to the man that he knew one by the same poet still more beautiful than that one, and that it began with *Quod vitae sectabor iter?* The person requested him to show it to him, and M. Descartes set about finding it, when he chanced on several small engraved portraits: which made him say that this book was extremely beautiful, but that it was not of the same edition as that which he knew. He was at this point when the books and the man disappeared and effaced themselves from his imagination, without, however, awaking him. What is remarkable is that, doubting whether what he had just seen was dream or vision, he not only decided, while sleeping, that it was a dream, but he even made the interpretation of it before sleep left him. He judged that the *Dictionary* meant no other thing but all the sciences gathered together; and the collection of poems, entitled *Corpus poetarum*, indicated in particular, and in a more distinct manner, philosophy and wisdom joined together. For he did not believe that one should be greatly astonished to see that the poets, even those who only play the fool, were full of sentences more grave, more sensible, and better expressed than those which are found in the writings of the philosophers. He attributed this marvel to the divinity of enthusiasm and to the force of imagination, which thrusts out the seeds of wisdom (which are found in the mind [*l'esprit*]) of all

men, like sparks of fire in stones) with much more facility, and even much more brilliance, than reason can do in the philosophers. M. Descartes, continuing to interpret his dream in his sleep, considered that the piece of verse on the uncertainty of the kind of life one ought to choose, which begins by *Quod vitae sectabor iter?*, indicated the good counsel of a wise person, or even moral theology.

"Thereupon, doubting whether he dreamed or meditated, he awoke without emotion, and continued, with open eyes, the interpretation of his dream on the same idea. By the poets gathered in the collection he understood revelation and enthusiasm, of which he did not despair to see himself favored. By the piece of verse *Est et Non*, which is the *Yes and No* of Pythagoras [in margin: *nai kai ou*], he understood truth and falsity in the human knowledges [*connaissances*] and the profane sciences. Seeing that the application of all these things succeeded so well to his taste, he was so bold as to persuade himself that it was the Spirit of Truth who had sought to open to him the treasures of all the sciences by this dream. And as there remained nothing more to explain but the small engraved portraits that he had found in the second book, he searched no more for the explanation after the visit an Italian painter made to him the next day."

To understand the third dream we must follow its content through three phases: the dream proper; the sleeping interpretation; the waking interpretation. Both transition points are underscored by an explicit act of doubt. The dream content turns chiefly about three things: the *Dictionary*; the piece of verse *Quod vitae sectabor iter?*; and the piece of verse *Est et Non*. Each of the three, and only these, signifies in a comprehensive manner, in the interpretations, certain studies or disciplines.

We now come to clear evidence of an orderly ascent within the *Olympica*. The significance of the three things is exactly graduated by their order of appearance and by their corresponding treatment in each of the three phases. In the sleeping interpretation, the first thing (the *Dictionary*) is inferior to the second (*Quod iter?*), while the third (*Est et Non*) is absent. In the waking interpretation, the first drops out, the meaning of the second

is drastically revised, while the third becomes the most significant. To put it differently, this graduation shows that the poetic rivalry of the two pieces of verse leads to the ascendancy of the second comprehensive symbol (*Quod iter?*) in the second phase, but of the third such symbol (*Est et Non*) in the third phase. The significance of the graduation is confirmed by a small detail: the mitigation of the *Dictionary* begins in the dream proper.

### III

The three comprehensive symbols of the third dream, and its three phases, require detailed examination, but this must be prefaced by an essential observation—for when we conjoin the evidences of a most articulate ascent in the treatment of this dream with the earlier indications of an orderly relation among the dreams, we are drawn to reexamine the customary assumption regarding the literary character of the *Olympica*. Is it, as usually assumed, a record of actual dreams of the "historical" Descartes? Or is it a conscious and deliberate construction?

If we believe it a record of actual dreams we must accept the veracity of two remarkable features. The first is that Descartes claims to interpret the third dream while still asleep. One might demur that it is being only too "Cartesian" to find this remarkable: is it not precisely the Cartesian tradition which has, so unsuccessfully, restricted the activity of mind to waking consciousness? Without dealing with this question, let us proceed to a reformulation of the point: what is remarkable is that the sleeping interpretation should fit so aptly, should occupy such a precisely graduated intermediate phase, between the dream proper and the waking interpretation. The second remarkable feature—though here we must anticipate—is that Descartes' own "Spirit" will be said to have predicted the dreams before Descartes went to bed: can we safely assume this marvelous report to be free of irony? In the face of these wonders it would be arbitrary to assume, as is the custom, that the *Olympica* comprises actual dreams.

If, on the contrary, we suppose that Descartes took a "poetic"

approach to rhetoric, and hypothesize that the *Olympica* belongs to an old tradition, of which Cicero's Scipionic dream is the most famous example, we can find abundant support in Descartes' writings. In the *Regulae* (A-T x, pp. 366-67, 373-74) he discusses at length the concealing devices of ancient rhetoric, first attacking the vanity of the ancient practice and then acknowledging that he will employ such devices, if in a novel manner. The *Discours* is presented by Descartes "as a history, or, if you prefer, as a fable" (p. 4). This duality of literary form, which governs the entire *Discours*, culminates in the "fable of the world," of *Discours* v. As Gilson has observed, Descartes here begins with "a chaos as confused as the poets can imagine"; he presents (pp. 42 ff.) a poetic account of his scientific cosmogony, after the fashion of Lucretius, because that cosmogony is "in open contradiction with the account of the creation that the Bible proposes." Descartes sought, according to Gilson, to avoid interpreting "the Biblical text allegorically"; he hoped to reconcile his cosmogony with "the letter of the sacred text," but "he ultimately abandoned" the effort (*Discours*, pp. 379 ff., 383). Furthermore, in his earlier writing, *Le monde* (suppressed by Descartes because of Galileo's condemnation), at a point that is parallel to *Discours* v, he presents his scientific cosmogony as "a fable, through which I hope that the truth will not fail to appear sufficiently, and that it will not be less agreeable to see than if I exposed it completely naked" (A-T xi, p. 31).

These cursory evidences of Descartes' numerous borrowings from the ancient practice of using "poetic" rhetoric as a way of presenting controversial views of received theology,<sup>6</sup> together with

<sup>6</sup> Descartes' "poetic" rhetorical practice lies between that of the ancients and that of the Enlightenment, for which it prepares. As regards fables see Aristotle's remarks on Aesop, in *Rhetoric*, 1393a30 and especially 1394a2: "Fables are suitable for addresses to popular assemblies." The most famous ancient example of a *fable du monde* is the "myth" of Plato's *Timaeus*, 29d. Descartes' immediate access to this tradition was probably Bacon; see especially Bacon's remarks on fables in the preface to *De sapientia veterum* (1609). According to Pico della Mirandola, the ancient motive for "poetic" rhetoric was not primarily fear of persecution; see Q. Breen, "Giovanni Pico della Mirandola on the Conflict of Philosophy and

the signs of a carefully articulated "ascent" within the *Olympica*, compel us to consider the possibility that the work's every feature, dream as well as interpretation, is consciously intended. The *Olympica* would then be a deliberate, "poetic" construction, whose meaning is disclosed only to careful study—even if it was occasioned by actual dreams. Indeed, without such a supposition how could we account for the poetic title supplied only by the waking Descartes?

Returning to the three comprehensive symbols of the third dream, the first to appear, the *Dictionary*, disappears after the introduction of the two pieces of poetry, and though it reappears it is then "no longer complete"; it is somehow depreciated by the entrance of poetry. In the sleeping interpretation it signifies "all the sciences gathered together," and is thus inferior to poetry, which signifies "philosophy and wisdom joined together," for Descartes does not equate these seemingly all-inclusive knowledges. Moreover, the sleeping interpretation proceeds to stress the superiority of imagination to reason: the poetic use of words is their supreme use. The status given the *Dictionary* in the sleeping interpretation disappears in the waking one, where it is not even mentioned. Its place is taken by the *Est et Non*, which signifies "the profane sciences."

A kindred fate, however, befalls poetry, which is drastically revised in the waking view and is also replaced by the *Est et Non*. Since both *Dictionary* and *Corpus poetarum* imply the use of words or speech, and both yield to the *Est et Non* of Pythagoras, the pagan exponent of mathematical philosophy, we can legitimately conclude that words or speech as the element of knowledge

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Rhetoric," in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 13 (June 1952) p. 397: "We are not unlike the ancients who by their riddles and by the masks of their fables made uninitiates shun the mysteries . . . Those who wish to conceal treasure not intended for sequestration are wont to cover it with refuse or rubbish . . . A like endeavor, to wit, that of philosophers to hide their business were fitting for people who not only do not appreciate but also do not even understand them." See especially Leo Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing* (Glencoe, Ill., 1952) p. 35: "a philosopher who chose the second way . . . would leave it to his philosophic readers to disentangle the truth from its poetic or dialectic presentation."

will be replaced by the objects of mathematics. The *Olympica* is silent regarding mathematics, but the conclusion drawn is the only one that accords with the suppression of the *Dictionary* and the emergence of the figure of Pythagoras. The significance of mathematics for Descartes in 1619 is amply corroborated by the *Discours* account of that year, and by the opinions of historians regarding the meaning of the "miraculous science" referred to in the heading of the *Olympica*.

The tension between poetry and "Pythagoras" begins in the dream proper. At the same moment his eye falls on the *Quod iter?* piece, the stranger presents the *Est et Non*. The two pieces of verse, but also their protagonists, the dreaming Descartes and what we may call the Pythagorean stranger, become rivals. The stranger urges attention to *Est et Non*, Descartes the claims of *Quod vitae sectabor iter?* To Descartes the *Quod iter?* piece, the poetic question, is "still more beautiful" than the phrase that separates and divides. The stranger poses questions, just as *Est et Non* implies alternatives, and the dreaming Descartes attempts but fails to answer the questions. The stranger asks where the "collection of poets" came from; Descartes knows its "order and arrangement" but not its origin. The dreaming Descartes cannot find the *Est et Non* piece, or is diverted by the small engraved portraits. He knows that it was written by Ausonius, but not that it was inspired by Pythagoras. He does not mention Pythagoras in the dream or in the sleeping interpretation. To him, the *Est et Non* is poetry, and he is ignorant of its philosophic source. Accordingly, the sleeping interpretation is silent regarding the *Est et Non* as well as the Pythagorean stranger. The only human named in the dream is a poet, Ausonius; the only human named at any time by the waking Descartes is a philosopher, Pythagoras. Poetry is linked with dreaming and sleep, philosophy with awakeness. Only the waking Descartes will see that in the *Est et Non* lies the way to answer the *Quod iter?* question.

The significance of Pythagoras is confirmed by turning to the *Idyllia* of Ausonius, to which Descartes has referred. The *Quod*

*vitae sectabor iter?*, which has primacy for the sleeping Descartes, is the opening question of the 15th *Idyllium*, entitled "On the Uncertainty of Choosing a [way of] Life—from the Greek of Pythagoras." The *Est et Non*, which is primary for the waking Descartes, is the first phrase of the 17th *Idyllium*, entitled "The Pythagorean 'Yes and No.'" Moreover, the intervening 16th *Idyllium* bears the title "On the Good Man—Pythagorean Declaration." Only these three of the whole of Ausonius' *Idyllia* refer to Pythagoras in the title; apart from these three, the only allusion to Pythagoras may refer to the center *Idyllium* of this group.<sup>7</sup> Hence the two pieces of verse Descartes quotes in the third dream point to the first and last *Idyllia* of, or mark off, the exclusively Pythagorean subsection. Any hesitation about including the middle 16th *Idyllium* is removed by its theme: it treats of the reflection a "good and wise man" makes concerning his deeds at the end of each day before enjoying a "sweet sleep."

The amazing fashion in which the two quoted pieces of verse silently enclose the 16th, which states Descartes' own problem, requires us to examine the Pythagorean *Idyllia* more carefully. The movement from the 15th to the 17th parallels that of the dreams, from the fearful to the calm. In the 15th the opening question (*Quod vitae sectabor iter?*) is followed by a roster of the miseries of man, and the extreme of misery is found not at the end but in the middle: the gods have unjustly given to miserable man the gift of immortality—unjustly because it promises only their immortal misery. Belief in gods does not entail belief in the benevolence of gods, not even of Jupiter; malevolent gods jeopardize the happiness of man. Suggestive as these details are of the "evil spirit" of Descartes, we cannot of course be certain that

<sup>7</sup> In the 12th *Idyllium* Ausonius refers to the Pythagorean use of the letter Y to signify that crossroads at which the choice of life is made. Similarly, Persius, *Satirae* III, 56–57, refers to the "Samian," that is, Pythagorean letter, which presents the good or "right" branch, or the course of virtue, as against the bad or "left" branch, which is the path of indulgence. The scholium to Persius indicates that the decisive choice is to be made at age sixteen; Ausonius' "Pythagorean" choice is made in the 16th *Idyllium*. I am grateful to Mr. S. Benardete for these references, as well as for the ancient meaning of "melon" as noted below in note 13.

he meant to allude to them. The opening *Quod iter?* question of the 15th *Idyllium* finds no answer therein, unless we consider death the answer supplied by its concluding "most excellent maxim"; "for man it is good not to be born, or born, speedily to possess death." In any event the middle of the *Idyllium* contradicts its conclusion, for death is no escape from misery if man is condemned to an immortality of misery. This *Idyllium* supplies, however, a "poetic" answer to a Pythagorean question: we may reasonably suppose Ausonius to have known that the source of the "most excellent maxim" is Greek tragedy.

In the 16th *Idyllium* the poetic or tragic answer is replaced by a philosophic answer, and misery vanishes. Its theme is "the good and wise man," of whom a god, Apollo, is the example, who rejects the opinion of the great and the vulgar; he rejects the tragic view of life altogether. Apollo examines himself and all things; he philosophizes, calming his soul, in the most human manner ("not closing his eyes in sweet sleep before he has meditated on all the acts of the long day")—just as Descartes does after the middle dream. (Descartes later used "Apollo" to signify clarity.<sup>8</sup>)

In the 17th *Idyllium* the *Est et Non* of the Pythagoreans, implying affirmation and denial—the conversation and dispute required for the discovery of truth and falsity—is the source of the "dialectical hubbub of the wise." Thus Ausonius' Pythagorean subsection "ascends" from the question of man's right life (15th) to goodness understood as self-knowledge (16th) to dialectical inquiry into the truth of all things (17th). The "ascent" is mirrored in the titles: that of the 15th is given wholly in Latin despite its content ("from the Greek of Pythagoras"); that of the 16th is partly in Latin and partly in Greek; and that of the 17th is wholly in Greek. But Ausonius appears to mock the wise in his ironic imitation of dialectic, in the 17th. Punning on *dies*, he writes: "Is it clear

<sup>8</sup> See the conversation with Burman (A-T v, pp. 168-69); "Mundi creationem satis ex sua philosophia, prout illa in Genesi (quem librum, ut et Canticum et Apocalypsin, si quis auctori explicet, magnus ipsi erit Apollo) describitur, auctor explicare posset."

[*dies*]? It is day [*dies*]!" He seems to prefer the literal or, rather, sensible "day" to the clarity of philosophic dialectic.

As for Ausonius' ultimate intention, we must limit ourselves here to noting that, according to Bayle, it cannot be established without paying due attention to the "disgraces and persecution" to which "paganism"—and therefore Pythagoreanism—was exposed in his day.<sup>9</sup> And since we cannot be sure to what extent Descartes wished to draw our attention to the details of the *Idyllia*, let us return to the safer terrain of the *Olympica*. The massive import of his references to the poetry of Ausonius is simply Pythagoras and philosophy.

The sleeping Descartes who is unaware of "Pythagoras" can praise poetry at the expense of reason—can indeed offer perhaps the highest praise bestowed on poetry by a philosopher. Yet it is a sleeping eulogy, and hence we cannot follow Gilson in drawing a contrast between this 1619 eulogy and the 1637 depreciation of poetry in the *Discours* (p. 7, and Gilson's commentary thereto, p. 124). The presence of a sleeping interpretation was sufficient to awaken the curiosity of Baillet ("what is remarkable"). The non-dreaming but sleeping Descartes doubts—for the first time explicitly—whether he had seen "dream" or "vision"; the waking Descartes will confirm the judgment that it was indeed "dream." But the sleeping Descartes does not distinguish or separate, or not immediately, sleeping and waking. Only later, after the eulogy of poetry and immediately after he has understood the *Quod iter?* piece to mean "the good counsel of a wise person" (presumably the poet Ausonius), "or even moral theology," does he doubt "whether he dreamed or meditated," and, upon doubting, awaken.

The sleeping Descartes refers to the superiority of "the poets" to "the philosophers" as "this marvel." The marvel has two causes: "the divinity of enthusiasm" and "the force of imagi-

<sup>9</sup> See P. Bayle, "Ausone," in *Dictionnaire*: "Quoique l'opinion générale le fasse Chrétien, il y a d'habiles gens qui croient qu'il ne l'était pas"; "en ce temps-là, le Christianisme étant sur le trône, et le Paganisme étant exposé aux disgrâces et à la persecution, il n'arrivait guère qu'un Chrétien se fit Païen"; "que peut-on voir de plus moral que sa description du *vir bonus*?"

nation," which produces "the seeds of wisdom" in poetry "with much more facility, and even much more brilliance, than reason can do in the philosophers." The poets thereby are "full of sentences more grave, more sensible, and better expressed" than those of the philosophers. Both poets and philosophers supply "sentences": their knowledge is verbal, and hence both are dependent on the *Dictionary*. But the poetic use of words is superior to their philosophic use. The poetic "seeds of wisdom" are separate and unconnected, like "sparks of fire" struck from "stones": the origin of poetry is as marvelous as it is obscure. The "sparks of fire" seen after the second dream were illusory and were dispelled by "reasons taken from philosophy"; the "sparks" mentioned in this dream will be understood only upon waking—as part of the reinterpretation of poetry.

However, a careful examination of this sleeping interpretation indicates why Descartes will revise his view of poetry in the third phase, the waking interpretation, which follows. The excellent poetic "sentences" are said to be found even in poets "who only play the fool": the poet is merely the vehicle of random poetic fire. In fact, his "seeds of wisdom" are "found in the mind of all men, like sparks of fire in stones." His wisdom is thus unwitting, for it is interspersed with foolishness; it is unrelated to his quality as poet, for as poet he may be inferior. Interspersal of wisdom and foolishness means that the wisdom of the poets does not form a connected account. One thereby understands how the *Discours* can speak of poetry as "gift of mind" rather than "fruit of study," and why Descartes says at its close "I desire for my judges" those "who join good sense with study" (pp. 7, 77). The opposition of poetry and knowledge was made still more explicit by Descartes in a letter of 1649: poetry is the gift of a troubled mind, specifically of illness, and generally of "a strong agitation of the animal spirits," which can, however, be opposed by firmness of mind; hence Socrates desired to write poetry in prison as death approached (A-T v, p. 281). Yet to the sleeping Descartes of the *Olympica* the *Corpus poetarum* signifies "philosophy and wisdom

joined together." The sleeping account leaves this signification inexplicable, for it has made wisdom the product of imagination and divine enthusiasm; more precisely, it has separated "reason" from "wisdom."

The distinctness of the third phase, the waking interpretation, is somewhat blurred because this account is presented as a continuation ("he awoke without emotion, and continued . . . on the same idea"). Yet Descartes now immediately reinterprets the *Corpus poetarum* as "revelation and enthusiasm"; and not poetry but only the Pythagorean *Est et Non* signifies "truth and falsity in the human knowledges and the profane sciences." The bold coupling of revelation and enthusiasm, and the understanding of both as significations of poetry—of poetry written by mortals—has gone unremarked.

It might be thought that this interpretation of the *Corpus poetarum* does not depart from the sleeping view of the *Quod iter?* piece as "moral theology." (Incidentally, it is hardly possible to understand how a question alone can signify moral theology unless we believe that Descartes, by means of the *Quod iter?*, is pointing to the 15th Idyllium, and to the problem inherent in its theological view.) And it is true that in the waking view Descartes preserves the connection between poetry and theology, revelation, and divinity. But he now separates the divine from the "human knowledges." Whereas the sleeping view understands poetry as a whole (the *Corpus poetarum*) as "philosophy and wisdom joined together," the waking view separates poetry as a whole—and thereby that for which poetry now stands, revelation and enthusiasm as a whole—from human knowledge. Similarly, in the *Discours*, "revealed truths . . . are above our intelligence" (p. 8), and are therefore separate from human knowledge. Yet the *Discours*, as well as other Cartesian writings, presents what has been called by scholars, though never by Descartes,<sup>10</sup> a "the-

<sup>10</sup> See the prefatory letter to *Méditations*, A-T ix A, p. 4: "I have always considered that these two questions, concerning God and the soul, were the principal ones which ought rather to be demonstrated by reasons from philosophy than from theology." See also letter to Mersenne, A-T 1, pp. 143-44.

ology" or a "rational theology," whereas the *Olympica* by no sign or statement suggests the possibility of "rational theology."

The separation of poetry from human knowledge coincides with, if it is not indeed a result of, the rise to primacy of *Est et Non*, "truth and falsity," or clear distinctions. We may suppose that by "revelation and enthusiasm" Descartes means two things. He does not, however, add "joined together" as he does with "philosophy and wisdom"; one thing, poetry, stands for both, and Descartes can speak of "the divinity of enthusiasm" in accordance with the etymological roots of "enthusiasm." The "enthusiasm" of the phrase "revelation and enthusiasm" is one of two species in the *Olympica*. It cannot be identified with the enthusiasm of scientific discovery, mentioned in the original Latin heading of the *Olympica*. Of the former he says "he did not despair to see himself favored"; he has not as yet received "revelation and enthusiasm," nor is it said to be received in the *Olympica* writing. Descartes' treatment of "revelation and enthusiasm" is thus consistent with the more extensive ones of Locke and Leibniz.<sup>11</sup>

#### IV

The distinction between "poetic" enthusiasm and the enthusiasm of science can only partly be clarified within the *Olympica*. That between poetry and philosophy—the new philosophy whose model is mathematics—turns on their diverse relations to imagination and reason. The kinship between poetry and dreaming lies in their common use of imagination separate from reason. Hence sleep, in which reason is quiescent, can be Descartes' "poetic" metaphor for poetry. The first dream begins with "his imagina-

<sup>11</sup> Compare Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, in which the chapter "Of Faith and Reason, and their Distinct Provinces" is followed by the chapter "Of Enthusiasm," in which "enthusiasm" is "this way of immediate revelation, of illumination without search, and of certainty without proof and without examination" (*Philosophical Works*, Bohn ed., vol. 2, p. 315); and Leibniz, *New Essays Concerning Human Understanding*, Bk. iv, Ch. 19. See also Descartes' distinction between "all the wisdom that one customarily has" and "divine revelation," which "raises us at a stroke to infallible belief," in prefatory letter to *Principles de Philosophie*, A-T ix B, p. 5.

tion was struck"; it concludes with "he awoke on this imagination." In the final dream, in which poetry is an explicit theme, the images appear and disappear as if by magic; the dream is interpreted before the images "effaced themselves from his imagination." In the second dream the piercing sound is immediately supplied an image (thunder) by the sleeping Descartes. During sleep the imagination, or more precisely the body, predominates. In the first dream Descartes slept on his left side, in the second probably on his right, but as regards the calm dream we have no indication of the side. Since he gazes about the chamber during his optical experiment immediately preceding that final dream, he may then be on his back; in any event the body is subordinate but not absent. The "sparks of fire" of the second dream were caused by his bodily state during the process of awakening; those of the third dream belong to the sleeping interpretation. These latter poetic "sparks of fire" are products of the imagination; they remain therefore in the domain of the bodily.

Descartes later wrote that "the imagination . . . is no other thing but a certain application of the faculty which knows to the body which is intimately present to it" (A-T IX A, p. 57). There is no doubt that this distinction raises the familiar problem of Descartes' "dualism." Yet Descartes, from the *Regulae* through the published writings, asserts the autonomy and separateness of the essential activity of "the faculty which knows" (the *intellectus purus*) from dependence on the presence of images (*phantasmata*) or activity of imagination. Precisely on this point he opposed the Aristotelian doctrine of abstraction.<sup>12</sup> It is the distinguishing capacity of reason, signified by the *Est et Non*, possible only in awkeness, which is peculiarly impossible to imagination or in sleep. In sleep the imagination did not distinguish between wisdom, poetry, and "moral theology"; awake the *Est et Non* separates the latter two from human knowledge.

<sup>12</sup> For the Cartesian doctrine of intellect and imagination see especially J. Klein, "Die griechische Logistik und die Entstehung der modernen Algebra," in *Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte der Mathematik, Astronomie und Physik*, vol. 3 (1936) pp. 207-25.

Just as the wax of *Méditations* II, and figure or body in general, are not knowable by means of imagination, but only by reason independently of it and of all images, so "this power of imagining which is in me, in so far as it differs from the power of conception, is in no part necessary to my nature or to my essence, that is to say, to the essence of my mind" (A-T ix A, p. 58). Descartes claims thereby to assert a new view of human identity, the ego whose thinking is purified of everything "poetic" or imaginative. His mature view is already implicit in the *Olympica*. Moreover, when we realize that the *images* struck from "stones" are themselves *words*—the "seeds of wisdom" of the poetic sentences—we see that he has here already at least adumbrated his dual charge against poetry and the "poetic" philosophic tradition. He charges them with failure to liberate thought from its customary dependence on words or speech (including opinion) and on imagination or the body (compare especially *Principes* I, 71–74).

By the movement from the pagan poet Ausonius to the pagan philosopher Pythagoras we arrive at the only possible explanation of the pagan title: the *Olympica* is a pagan ascent. The waking interpretation, however, culminates not in Pythagoras but in the truth of Pythagoras, or "the Spirit of Truth," which is not pagan but universal. Paganism as a belief in the Olympian deities was a particular form of piety; the ascent goes beyond the title and beyond all piety. Nowhere in the *Olympica* is "the Spirit of Truth" related to "revelation and enthusiasm" or any deity. In turning now to its reinterpretation of the fearful dreams we would only obscure the true "peak" of the *Olympica* if we made the descent without retaining the distinction Descartes has drawn between human knowledge and everything "poetic."

"This last dream, which contained nothing which was not most sweet and most agreeable, signified the future according to him; and was only that which should occur to him during the rest of his life. But he took the two preceding ones for threatening warnings concerning his past life, which could not have been as innocent before God as before men. And he believed that this

was the reason for the terror and the fright with which these two dreams were accompanied. The melon, of which someone wished to make him a present in the first dream, signified, he said, the charms of solitude, but presented by purely human solicitations. The wind which pushed him toward the church of the college, when he was having difficulty on the right side, was nothing but the evil spirit which tried to throw him by force into a place where it was his purpose to go voluntarily.

"[In margin: I was driven by an evil spirit to the temple (*A malo Spiritu ad templum propellebar*).]

"That is why God did not permit him to advance further, and let him be carried off, even into a holy place, by a spirit that He had not sent: although he was very persuaded that it had been the Spirit of God who had made him take the first steps toward that church. The fear by which he was stricken in the second dream indicated, in his opinion, his conscience [*syndérese*], this is to say, the remorse of his conscience [*conscience*] concerning the sins that he could have committed during the course of his life up to then. The clap of thunder [*foudre*] which he had heard was the signal of the Spirit of Truth which descended on him to possess him.

"This last imagination assuredly contained something of enthusiasm; and it disposes us easily to believe that M. Descartes had drunk that night, before going to bed. Indeed it was the eve of St. Martin, the evening when one customarily makes a debauch wherever one is, as in France. But he assures us that he had passed the evening and the whole day in great sobriety, and that it had been three whole months since he had drunk wine. He adds that the Spirit [*Génie*] who excited in him the enthusiasm with which he had felt his brain heated for several days had predicted these dreams before he lay down on his bed, and that the human mind had no part in them.

"However this may be, the impression which remained to him from these agitations caused him to make various reflections the next day on the course that he ought to take. The perplexity in which he found himself caused him to turn to God in order to ask that He make known His will, to clarify it, and to conduct him in the search for truth. Afterward he addressed himself to the Holy Virgin, to commend this matter to her, which he judged the most important of his life. And in order to interest the most blessed Mother of God in the most urgent manner, he took the

occasion of the voyage that he contemplated making into Italy in a few days, to form the vow of a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Lorette. [In margin: OLYMPIC. CARTES., as above]"

This concluding section of the *Olympica* comprises: the contrast between the "future" promised by the third dream and the fearful character of the preceding ones; reinterpretation of the first dream; reinterpretation of the second dream; remarks on the occasion of the dreams and their prophecy, by Descartes' own "Spirit"; and the vow to make a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Lorette. The problem of the conclusion is the relation of "the Spirit of Truth," and its prophetic promise of "the treasures of all the sciences," to the "evil spirit," "God," and "the Spirit of God" whom Descartes considers upon returning to the fearful dreams. After clarifying this relation we can approach Descartes' own prophetic "Spirit."

## v

From the "peak" of the third dream Descartes descends to reconsider the earlier nightmares. The first dreams he regards as God's warnings regarding his past life; the final dream, which contained only the "most sweet and most agreeable," indicated the future. Hence the future will be free from God's threatening warnings and their fear and terror. How is this to be possible? The whole meaning of the *Olympica* turns on the manner in which we answer this question.

We may answer that Descartes' life must be free of sin, or at least such sins as would call forth God's warnings. This, however, is imprecise. Descartes' life must be free of such sins as are known to him; after the first dream he left it indeterminate whether the "men" to whom his past life was "irreproachable" included himself. Strictly, Descartes must know that his future life will contain no sins so secret as to be known only to God. And this is impossible, since God knows men's hearts infinitely better than do men themselves, or, more exactly, since God knows the human heart in a way unknown to man himself. It

would be possible, however, on the assumption that Descartes excludes knowledge of theology or divinity from that human knowledge which suffices to secure his future calm. This assumption is doubtless contradicted by the "rational theology" of the published writings. But the *Olympica* has already excluded poetry and what it signifies, "revelation and enthusiasm," from human knowledge, and never implies the possibility of "rational theology."

Moreover, just as the waking interpretation of the third dream culminates in "the human knowledges and the profane sciences," so now the melon of the first dream is interpreted as "the charms of solitude, but presented by purely human solicitations."<sup>18</sup> The supreme charms of solitude, "the solitude of his *poèle*" in Baillet's phrase (A-T x, p. 187), or of the *poèle* of *Discours* II, were the charms of the quest for knowledge, or philosophy. "If, among the purely human occupations of men, there is some one which is solidly good and important, I dare to believe that it is that which I have chosen" (*Discours*, p. 3). It should go without saying that the choice of a "purely human" occupation, when that occupation is philosophy, is dependent only on knowledge that is accessible to man as man.

The *Olympica* has paused in its "descent" to allude by means of the melon to the "purely human" character of philosophy, in agreement with the meaning of "Pythagoras." It can do so only by treating the events of the first dream in inverse order. It now reverts from the melon and the stranger, with which the dream culminates, to the earlier "violent wind" and the "evil spirit," apparently losing sight of philosophy as well as calm. The "evil spirit," now become "the wind which pushed him toward the church of the college," tried "to throw him by force into a place where it was his purpose to go voluntarily." The evil spirit that entered the *Olympica* in the interpretation of the first dream as

<sup>18</sup> For the ancient meaning of the melon in Galenic medicine, as a counteractive to the passions, see *De simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis ac facultatibus*, Ch. 23 (Kühn ed. vol. 11, p. 777). Descartes' meditation in the *Poèle* can begin when he, by chance, is free from the passions (*Discours*, p. 11).

the mysterious cause of a bodily pain has now migrated into the dream proper.

To grasp the new interpretation we must compare the details of the dream as first recounted with what is now said of it. In the discrepancy between the two accounts lies the clue to the first dream. In the new version "it was his purpose to go voluntarily" into the church; in the earlier account he was "walking up the street," trying "to advance to the place where he wished to go," a place that is in no wise identified as the church. Only after he is "frightened" by "certain phantoms" and blown about by the "violent wind" does he seek first the college and then the church of the college. Hence only in the predicament caused above all by the violent wind, that is, the evil spirit, does he "voluntarily" seek the church. (Descartes' "irrational" identification of a fearful wind with a fearful deity has a precedent if not a model in Lucretius' account of the origin of belief in gods: *De rerum natura*, v, 1126-1232.)

The hostility of the evil spirit to Descartes' advance "to the place where he wished to go" is matched by its opposition to civility. Turning to a man of his acquaintance, "to be civil," Descartes "was repelled with violence by the wind which blew against the church." Conversely, civility or friendship enables one to withstand the evil spirit, for the stranger who speaks in "civil and obliging terms" and the friends who converse with him are unaffected by the wind. (In the 15th *Idyllium* Ausonius speaks of the friendship of the Pythagorean sect while indicating its vulnerability: the Pythagoreans perish for the crime of friendship.) The stranger and his friends are inside the college but outside the church, for whose refuge they have no need. The stranger's remark points Descartes to "Monsieur N." and a melon, not to the church. The stranger of the first dream would seem then to anticipate the "Pythagorean stranger" of the third: the first stranger is unperturbed by the evil spirit that drives Descartes to the church, while the second directs his attention to *Est et Non*, which signifies a truth distinct from revelation.

We now consider the relations of "the evil spirit," "God," and "the Spirit of God." The "wind," or the evil spirit, keeps Descartes from being able to "advance to the place where he wished to go," as the phantoms have previously done, whereas in the re-interpretation "God did not permit him to advance further." Since the action of God and the evil spirit is one and the same, we may be tempted to the remarkable inference that they are identical. Moreover, "the Spirit of God" raises a similar question: "I was driven by an evil spirit to the temple," but it was "the Spirit of God" that "made him take the first steps toward that church." "The first steps" toward the church, as distinct from his original motion "to the place where he wished to go," are the immediate result of the action of the violent wind. This identity of actions makes it appear that the three superhuman agents or persons are in fact one. God "let him be carried off, even into a holy place, by a spirit that He had not sent." The spirit whom God had not sent can scarcely be "the Spirit of God," and thus the identity of the three superhuman agents or persons is questionable; but it is beyond doubt an evil spirit whose actions are controlled by God. In this cryptic manner Descartes poses, but does not offer an explicit discussion of, the timeless question of the relation of evil and omnipotence. But by leaving his reflection at this stage he makes clear why he nowhere indicates that future calm will be attained in and through "the church."

The difficulty of regarding the *Olympica* as a faithful account of actual dreams has now become insurmountable unless we suppose that God, by controlling the images of the dreams, sought, according to Descartes, to control as well the interpretations, which alone give them meaning; but that He somehow neglected to control the images of the upright stranger and the melon, which divert Descartes from "the church."

The new account now offered of the second dream supports our earlier view of its movement from fear to calm. The fright of the second dream "indicated, in his opinion, his conscience

[syndérèse], that is to say, the remorse of his conscience [*conscience*]." The cause of remorse is "sins," just as they were the cause of the fears of the first dream. Only now does Descartes make it clear that he doubts whether he had sinned according to his own knowledge ("the sins that he could have committed"). Once more the issue concerns the belief in a divine power who knows such possible secret sins as are not known with certainty by Descartes himself, or a belief which denies that one's future calm is within the power of human knowledge. As observed above, to understand the movement to calm we must conjoin the cause of fear that is named only in the new account, namely conscience, with the recourse to philosophy, mentioned only in the first account.

The "clap of thunder" (*foudre*) is the signal for "the Spirit of Truth": it is not a *foudre du ciel* in the sense of divine punishment. Nor is "the Spirit of Truth" the same as "conscience," which nowhere is said to indicate "the future." The "Spirit of Truth" appears twice in the *Olympica*, first (according to the re-interpretation) in the aftermath of the second dream, at the moment of, or just prior to, the turning to "reasons taken from philosophy," and again in the waking interpretation of the third dream, at the culmination of the ascent via the pagan poet and the pagan philosopher. It is never connected with a superhuman being.

We may turn to the *Discours* to confirm this view of Descartes' rejection of conscience, as well as for a view of vows which bears on "the vow of a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Lorette." It will be recalled that *Discours II-III* is Descartes' only published account, unmediated by a biographer, of his opinions at the time of the *Olympica* writing. In *Discours I* Descartes, having sought "a clear and assured knowledge of all that is useful to life," had concluded, with regard to his studies, that there was "no doctrine in the world such as I had been made previously to hope for" (pp. 4-5). Accordingly, in *Discours II* he takes "the unaided resolution to

divest himself of all the opinions that had been received previously in his belief" (p. 15). His purpose compels him, in the first provisional moral rule, to regard "as excessive all the promises by which one curtails anything of one's liberty" (pp. 23-24). Among such excessive promises he includes the "vows" that remedy "the inconstancy of weak minds." His "resolution" will deliver him from "all the repentance and remorse which customarily agitate the consciences of these weak and wavering minds" (pp. 24-25). By his "resolution," therefore, Descartes dispenses utterly with the necessity of repentance. It goes without saying that this view has no precedent in the Christian tradition.

Descartes reserved his thematic treatment of the specific human type of "weak minds," and therewith of "conscience," to his last publication, the *Passions de l'âme*. But given the *Discours* account of his view of vows in 1619, and the absence of any proof of an actual pilgrimage, the assertion of the vow to journey to Lorette will be decisive only for those who select statements from the *Olympica* without considering each one in the light of the whole. Even a proof of the pilgrimage would not establish his piety, for the necessity of prudent speech that Descartes mentions in *Discours* III—"in the corruption of our morals there are few men who wish to say all that they believe" (p. 23)—clearly applies equally, or even more, to action.

Among the *Olympica*'s superhuman panoply, the "Spirit" (*le Génie*) of Descartes, who "had predicted these dreams before he lay down on his bed," would seem least deserving of serious consideration, but one or two observations may be made. This "Spirit" is dissociated from the affiliations of "the evil spirit." No relation with "God" is suggested in any way. Regarded positively, it resembles "the Spirit of Truth" in so far as it predicts future dreams, just as the latter opened to him the treasures of the sciences in a dream that "signified the future." This predictive capacity alone would remind us of Socrates' "daimonion" (see especially *Theages*, 128d ff.), or *génie* as Descartes termed it.

Socrates' *génie* was as distinguishable from the Olympian gods as Descartes' "Spirit" is unrelated to all other superhuman beings of the *Olympica*.

This parallel is not unduly "speculative." Toward the end of his life, according to Baillet (*Vie de Descartes*, II, p. 408), Descartes wrote a treatise *De deo Socratis*, which has been lost. However, in a letter of 1646 (A-T v, p. 529) he identified his belief that "interior joy has some secret force to render Fortune more favorable" with Socrates' belief in his *génie*: "What one commonly calls the *génie* of Socrates was doubtless nothing but that he was accustomed to follow his interior inclinations, and thought that the outcome of what he undertook would be happy when he had some secret sentiment of gaiety, and, on the contrary, that it would be unfortunate when he was sad." In understanding Socrates' divine sign as a natural inclination, Descartes was perhaps following a favored author, Montaigne (*Essays*, I, Ch. 11), who also specified, however, that natural inclination was to be "well purified and prepared by continual exercise of wisdom and virtue."

Descartes' 1646 view of Socrates' *génie* has in common with his "Spirit" in the *Olympica* its detachment from "conscience." True, the 1646 view appears to offer no basis for the *Olympica* statement that "the human mind had no part" in the dreams predicted by "the Spirit." But this superhuman or, strictly, non-human activity is not said to be supernatural. And his view of 1646, because it related the *génie* to "Fortune," which was for him superhuman or non-human but not supernatural, would be shocking, Descartes realized, to "weak minds": "I would not wish to write this to persons who had weak minds, for fear of leading them into some superstition." Parts of life are ruled by "Fortune," as was asserted by Descartes in the same letter: "Concerning the important actions of life, when they are encountered in such a doubtful form that prudence cannot instruct what one should do, it seems to me one has good reason to follow the counsel of one's *génie*." Adoption of such an explanation for Descartes' "Spirit" in the *Olympica* does not, however, require us to ex-

clude an element of ironic exaggeration, similar to that of Socrates' references to his "daimonion."

## VI

The conclusions to be drawn, "as through a glass, darkly," from Baillet's summary of the *Olympica* furnish an indispensable insight into the earliest phase of Descartes' "rationalism." As contrasted with the published writings, the *Olympica* is characterized by the absence of a "rational theology" and the presence of a visible relation between a finite "evil spirit" and God. These related if not inseparable features are derivative from its deepest trait, the practical quest of the young Descartes—or at any rate the protagonist of his *Olympica*—for rational assurance of tranquility. This quest may be called that "pagan" or Stoic element of the *Olympica* which Descartes found impossible to reconcile with traditional Biblical theology.

It is clear that he equally failed to reconcile the evil of the "evil spirit" with the goodness and omnipotence of God. The peculiar literary form of the *Olympica* is partly designed to indicate as well as to obscure the most heterodox acknowledgment of his failure. No doubt this failure appeared to Descartes as that "awakeness" or emancipation from the bondage of "ancient opinions" for which the sleeping slave struggles at the end of the first *Méditation*.

Only by diligent application to its "poetic" rhetoric does the *Olympica* become intelligible. That it does not represent merely an early and superseded stage of Descartes' thought is indicated by those doctrines it has in common with the published writings—especially as regards "conscience." Far from being the writing in which Descartes claims a divine inspiration for his philosophy, the *Olympica*, as distinct from the published writings, which present a "rational theology," clearly distinguishes between rational knowledge and all theology. It could thereby be regarded as even more "rationalist" than the traditional interpretation of Descartes.

The later "rational theology" is evidence that Descartes was dis-

satisfied with his early conclusions, or with their rhetorical presentation, or both. Yet it was the same problem of divine omnipotence, which finds no solution in the *Olympica*, that led, as the most illuminating of Gilson's Cartesian works has shown, to Descartes' "perhaps most original," most heterodox, and most dissimulated theological doctrine of the divine creation of eternal ideas.<sup>14</sup> A separate study would be required to examine the connection between the emergence of this doctrine and the transformation of the finite "evil spirit" of the *Olympica* into the omnipotent one of the *Méditations*.

<sup>14</sup> See Gilson, *La liberté . . .* (cited above, note 2) p. 157: "De toutes ses conceptions métaphysiques elle est peut-être la plus originale, celle qui contient le moins d'éléments adventices et qui s'explique le mieux par les nécessités internes du système. C'est peut-être aussi pourquoi Descartes se garde la mettre en évidence et semble la dissimuler." As regards the amazing brevity of indications of Descartes' heterodox doctrine of God in the *Méditations* and *Principes*, Gilson asks (p. 14): "Quelle est peut-être la raison de ce silence ou tout au moins de cette extrême discréption?" and indicates (pp. 441-42) the direction a possible answer could take: "Il ne transforme les conceptions traditionnelles que lorsqu'il s'y trouve contraint, c'est à-dire lorsque les exigences de sa physique sont incompatible avec la théologie communément enseignée."

# RISK, UTILITY, AND SOCIAL POLICY

BY WILLIAM VICKREY

UTILITY is the technical term that economists have settled on to designate the degree to which individuals attain the goals they are presumably pursuing when they choose among alternative courses of action. Originally conceived of as rather closely approaching a measure of subjective satisfaction or pleasure, it has in the hands of many modern authors been almost completely purged of this experiential content, and has come to mean more nearly "what individuals tend to maximize in making choices," much as in physics a gravitational potential is what a body tends to minimize when allowed to move in a gravitational field.

In addition to differences over the psychic content of the utility concept, there have been more tangible differences, regarding the degree to which it is conceived to be measurable. Bentham advanced a "felicific calculus" in terms of the intensity, duration, purity, and other qualities of pleasures and pains, strongly implying that if direct measurement in terms of these parameters was not yet an accomplished fact, it was just around the corner. Pareto, however, valiantly wielding Occam's Razor, asserted that if all that can be objectively observed is the choices that individuals do make among alternatives, then it suffices to know when the utility of one state is greater than that of another, and it is operationally meaningless to inquire by how much greater, or whether state B provides an individual with 10 percent more utility than A, since the objective choice would be the same regardless of the answer. Indeed, to emphasize his objection to the "cardinally measurable" utility of Bentham, he coined the term *ophélimité* for his version of the concept, and thus became the father of the "ordinalist" school.

Although the term ophelimity never caught on, the ordinalist

view thus introduced did, and it gained ground rapidly until, in 1944, von Neumann and Morgenstern, for purposes of their theory of games, resurrected an idea tracing back to Daniel Bernoulli in 1738. This idea is that for an individual faced with choices involving uncertain outcomes it would be rational to maximize "moral expectation," defined as a weighted average of the utilities associated with the different possible outcomes resulting from a given choice, the weights being proportional to the probabilities of these outcomes. If utility is thus defined as that of which individuals attempt to maximize the expectation, it becomes "cardinally" defined "to within linear transformations." This means that we can take the utility of two states A and B as calibration points, analogous to defining a temperature scale in terms of the freezing and boiling points of water, and that if  $U(A) = 100$  and  $U(B) = 200$ , the utility of C is determined by finding that probability p such that the individual is just on the margin of indifference between choosing the certainty of C as against an alternative that promises B with probability p and A with probability  $1 - p$ ; given such a p, we have  $U(C) = 100(1 + p)$ .

Partly because this resurrection of the Bernoullian theory was associated with the formidable mathematics of the theory of games, partly because of observations of behavior that seemed incompatible with the assumption that individuals can be considered, even in an average sense, to exhibit the kind of rationality assumed by this theory, and partly for other reasons, acceptance of this form of utility function as relevant to the "welfare" to be pursued as a social and political policy has been very slow, and many economists have explicitly denied that there is or can be any connection. Professor Baumol has recently joined his voice to those who would deny that an index thus defined in terms of risky choice can have any status as a measure of satisfaction or any role as a predictor of choice in risky situations—thus following the stand that has been taken with varying degrees of vigor by Ellsberg and Friedman-Savage, among others.<sup>1</sup> The opposite view is represented by

<sup>1</sup> W. J. Baumol, "The Cardinal Utility which is Ordinal," in *Economic Journal*,

casual identification rather than by explicit statement, and it probably would not be fair to impute a definite view to authors on such scanty evidence. Even Sir Dennis Robertson, after having a good look at the von Neumann and Morgenstern baby, now a strapping youth of seventeen years, rather thinks that it is not the sort of child he wants to adopt as his own.<sup>2</sup> The present article is an attempt to provide a basis for according somewhat greater status to this index, even to the extent of making it a major pillar of normative economics.

#### *Methods for Cardinal Measurement of Utility*

On taking a first look at the risk-utility function of the theory of games, which we shall call  $U_G$ , many were inclined to identify it without further ado with the introspectively and intuitively postulated "utility," "happiness," or "joy" that had been discussed, but never effectively measured, by Bentham, Jevons, Marshall, and others. Baumol, however, appears to place  $U_G$  in a category intermediate between the purely ordinal ophelimity of Pareto,  $U_P$ , and the conceptually cardinal utility or happiness,  $U_B$ , that Bentham was seeking to maximize in terms of its algebraic sum over the entire population. There have of course been other attempts at an operational definition of utility, and it is perhaps worth while for completeness to mention here the Fisher-Frisch cardinal utility  $U_F$ , derived from the assumption that it is possible to find a pair of commodities or commodity groups such that it can be asserted on a priori grounds that the marginal utility of one does not depend on the quantity of the other.<sup>3</sup> There is also the individual-utility measure  $U_R$ , which can be considered to be contained in the

vol. 68 (December 1958) pp. 665-72; D. Ellsberg, "Classical and Current Notions of 'Measurable Utility,'" in *Economic Journal*, vol. 64 (September 1954) pp. 528-56; Milton Friedman and L. J. Savage, "The Expected Utility Hypothesis and the Measurement of Utility," in *Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 60 (December 1952) pp. 463-74.

<sup>2</sup> D. H. Robertson, "Utility and all What?," in *Economic Journal*, vol. 64 (December 1954) pp. 665-78.

<sup>3</sup> Ragnar Frisch, "New Methods of Measuring Marginal Utility," in *Beiträge zur Ökonomische Theorie* (Tübingen 1932).

Rothenberg (ordinal) social-utility or welfare function  $W = f(U_{R1}, U_{R2}, \dots, U_{Rn})$ , where  $W$  can be thought of as that function of individual utilities which authorities attempt to maximize in making their policy decisions, much in the same sense in which  $U_p$  can be defined as that which the individual attempts to maximize in making his personal decisions.<sup>4</sup> Further operational variants of the utility concept will be encountered as we proceed.

The identification of the theory-of-games utility,  $U_g$ , with "old-fashioned 'cardinal' joy,"  $U_B$ , is characterized by Baumol as naive, in that it assumes that the marginal utility of successive increments in the probability of winning a specified prize is constant. In terms of the  $U_g$  utility index this marginal utility is of course constant, as a logical consequence of the definition; in terms of  $U_B$  it is perhaps a little difficult to see directly why it should be, yet in certain circumstances a bridge can be constructed indicating a close similarity, if not identity, between  $U_g$  and  $U_B$ .

To be sure, there are some interpretations of  $U_B$  that provide no foundations for this bridge. If we consider  $U_B$  to be identical with a hypothetical  $U_R$  that would serve, in Rothenberg's scheme, to rationalize the observed actions of a specific parliament, there may be no basis for a bridge. But surely Bentham was trying to indicate to Parliament how it should act, rather than merely to provide a rationale in terms of which the way a parliament is observed to act can be explained, so we may dismiss  $U_R$  as irrelevant. Similarly, there is grave doubt as to whether the observed preference patterns are such as to be compatible with an "independence of utilities" function  $U_p$ , let alone whether, if such a pattern were to be found, the proposition of utility independence could be maintained a priori. While it is true that many of the Benthamite writings are couched in terms that could be taken to imply independently additive joys, it is surely in the spirit of his line that once interdependence is recognized at all, it should be admitted generally.

<sup>4</sup> Jerome Rothenberg, "Conditions for a Social Welfare Function," in *Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 61 (October 1953) pp. 389-405.

Indeed, it might well be considered that it is the approach of the psychophysicists that lies in the most direct line of descent from Bentham, via Jevons and Marshall, in that direct appeal is made to the judgment of the subjects. Experimenter have had a certain degree of success in producing reasonably uniform results by simply asking a naive subject naive questions. However, an attempt to import these techniques into economics for the construction of utility functions raises questions that may seriously impair the validity of the techniques.

In the threshold-of-discrimination techniques the experimenter achieves a certain degree of objectivity by ascertaining at various levels of the stimulus just what difference in the magnitude of two similar stimuli will enable the subject to discern, with say 90 percent accuracy, which of the two is the greater. Even in the best of experimental conditions the method has its pitfalls, in that wide variations in the circumstances surrounding the presentation of the stimuli may affect the results; for example, different "JNDs" (just noticeable differences) may be generated according to whether the subject is lifting two weights from the table in front of him or must go to the other end of the room in order to lift the second.

In the measurement of utility it is difficult to imagine, even in principle, how such an experiment could be carried out in a meaningful way. It is not feasible, in practice, actually to cause the subject to experience successively two alternative levels of income. Even if this were feasible, the results would be difficult to interpret, since, as Boulding so well emphasizes, much of the joy we obtain from an event occurs not while the event is taking place but from anticipation and planning, on the one hand, and recollection (and retelling!) on the other. We are therefore forced to fall back on hypothetical choice based on description. To be sure, the choice may be motivated by arranging that upon the occurrence of some random event with a small but positive probability, the choice will be converted by the experimenter to a real one; but the choice itself is still necessarily made on the basis of description. Everything then depends on the terms of the descrip-

tion, and on how close the alternatives are to each other in directions other than in line with the origin.

If the only difference between two alternatives is expressed as the difference between two sums of money, discrimination is likely to be nearly perfect, except for subjects who really do not understand the questions in the first place, and hence yield no utility measure. It is no use asking about preferences between A,Y and A,Y' where A is an apartment on 12th Street and Y and Y' are two sums of money to be spent on groceries: the larger sum of money will be preferred with near certainty, no matter how small the differential. On the other hand, if we consider another similar apartment B, also on 12th Street, with sums Z and Z' to be spent on groceries, and ascertain for what Z the combination B,Z will be chosen 90 percent of the time over A,Y, and for what Z' the combination A,Y will be preferred to B,Z' 90 percent of the time, we may say that  $U_j(B,Z) - U_j(A,Y) = U_j(A,Y) - U_j(B,Z') = 1$  JND. But if we now consider what sums W and W' in combination with C, an apartment on 136th Street, will result in A,Y being chosen rather than C,W and C,W' with 90 and 10 percent probability, respectively, we are likely to find that W - W' considerably exceeds Z - Z', and the hypothesis that  $U_j(C,W) = U_j(B,Z)$  and  $U_j(C,W') = U_j(C,W)$  becomes untenable.

Perhaps considerably closer to Bentham's intent would be a technique analogous to that in which the subject is asked to adjust sound stimulus A until it is "twice as loud" as sound stimulus B. In the utility case the corresponding question "what income would make you twice as happy as you are now?" might evoke an embarrassingly large number of responses to the effect that no mere increment of income could accomplish this; on the other hand, to ask "what income would make you 10 percent better off" might evoke an even larger number of responses asking "what do you mean, '10 percent better off'?" Nevertheless, it is probably time that economists took such possible approaches a little more seriously; psychophysicists using comparable techniques have obtained results that are at least reasonably self-consistent, in spite of the

ordinalist's characterizing them as essentially meaningless. Some-what more definite responses might be obtained by asking ques-tions of the form "what increment to your income would be nec-es-sary to increase your happiness by as much as a decrease of \$100 would lower it?" While this precise question might result in answers severely polarized by considerations of the frictional cost of changes in either direction in the standard of living, other more complicated questions could in principle be devised that would get over such a hurdle—though probably at considerable cost in terms of the difficulty of getting the question understood by the respondent.

A more pervasive difficulty, which may be impossible to over-come completely, is that the satisfactions associated with levels of income in the neighborhood of that currently or recently experienced are the most vivid in the mind of the respondent, and that he may therefore tend to exaggerate the gradient of the utility function in the neighborhood of his actual income, and understate the gradient for more remote regions. On the other hand, as pointed out by Friedman and Savage,<sup>5</sup> there may also be a "thresh-old effect," whereby the utility loss or gain associated with small changes in income is overwhelmed by the inherent uncertainties in the relationship between income and utility; or is diminished by the frictions that inhibit small changes in living standards or constrain them to less effective channels; or is so small as to escape conscious consideration. In such cases there may be a systematic tendency to understate the utility differential for a small income change, such as that derived from a successful lottery ticket, as compared with that for a large change, such as would be associated with a winning sweepstakes ticket. At best, what is obtained is an estimate of the function representing the utility that the subject associates at a given point of time with different hypothetical incomes, which is not necessarily the best available estimate of the actual satisfaction that would in fact be obtained. Whether there

<sup>5</sup> Milton Friedman and L. J. Savage, "The Utility Analysis of Choices Involving Risk," in *Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 56 (August 1948) pp. 279-304.

is any close relationship between such a  $U_N$  (obtained by naive questioning) and a  $U_G$  (derived from choices among gambles) is in principle subject to experimental verification; the a priori grounds for expecting such a relationship to emerge may seem fairly weak.

#### *Utility Functions and Social Policy*

Yet more fundamentally, when the Benthamite utility function is considered in relation to the application intended to be made of it, there may be a closer relation between  $U_B$  and  $U_G$  than even between  $U_B$  and  $U_N$ . One may, for example, imagine a situation in which two separate expeditions are being formed to found colonies in Terra Australia Incognita. The leadership of the two expeditions may be considered to be in the hands of older men "without hope of posterity." The remainder of each expedition is to be recruited from a population that is homogeneous as to utility function and as to presently evident capabilities. It is from this homogeneous population and its descendants that the eventual population of the colonies will derive, but there is no way of predicting which of the embarking colonists is most likely to fill any particular role after the retirement of the present leadership. The articles of association are to specify in great detail how the national product is to be redistributed via various social schemes, and thus the prospective colonists will have a clear picture of their chance of attaining various levels of income.

In this situation—given a utility function and a relation between the distribution of income, the consequent intensity of economic incentives, and the attainable aggregate national income—the selection of a social policy for the colony can be made with the aim of maximizing the aggregate utility. Profiting from the experience of Roanoke and other experiments with extreme egalitarianism, the policymakers will presumably introduce some inequality, but probably not so much as would eventuate from a policy of complete individualism. The question is what utility function is appropriate to use for such a purpose?

The test that seems relevant in this case is whether the utility function leads, via application of the maximization-of-aggregate-utility principle, to the adoption of that social policy for the colony-to-be which makes the venture most attractive to the prospective colonists. Indeed, one might attempt to deduce a new utility function, specialized to this purpose, by constructing the indifference map of the colonists among all the varieties of social policy that might be offered, and determining the utility function,  $U_c$ , that would rationalize this indifference map. But if this procedure is either too time-consuming or too complex for the impatient leaders of the expeditions, is there not some information they can draw from the utility functions  $U_G$ ,  $U_N$ , or  $U_F$ , assuming that surveys have already established these functions for the population under consideration?

On examination it appears that the choice confronting the prospective colonists is not so very much different from a choice between alternative gambles in which the prizes are incomes corresponding to the net incomes anticipated for the various roles in the new colonies, while the probabilities of the various prizes are proportional to the number of such anticipated roles in the population. The notion of choosing among gambles in such a way as to maximize expected utility is closely isomorphic with the problem of choosing between two alternative colonies on the basis of the maximum per capita utility, which for colonies of the same aggregate population will be the same as choosing the colony with the largest aggregate utility. There is thus very strong reason to believe that a  $U_G$  derived from choices among gambles would correspond very closely to the  $U_c$  that would be appropriate for choosing a social-welfare policy for such a colony, if indeed the two would not be indistinguishable. There is thus considerable warrant for identifying the  $U_G$  derived from risky choices with the  $U_B$  that is to be used as a criterion for the selection of a social policy, at least in the peculiar circumstances of our hypothetical example.

It is possible, to be sure, to claim that attitudes toward pure

gambles based on purely random events, such as the drawing of a lottery, may differ substantially from attitudes toward gambles involving one's own prowess, even though there may be no more a priori evidence of one's suitability for life in the new world than there is of the way a lottery will turn out. Or there may be some who feel that the element of adventure presented by the possibility of achieving different degrees of eminence is sufficient spice in itself, and does not require the addition of the further element of a wide range of incomes; if they are asked about a lottery under stay-at-home conditions they may feel much more in need of the insertion of a chance element into their otherwise drab lives. This particular difficulty might perhaps be surmounted by imputing a psychic income to each role, in addition to the money income, though to find any objective basis for doing this might prove difficult. But in so far as  $U_G$  is assumed to rationalize risky choice in areas of skill and judgment—such as racetrack and pool betting, bridge, or poker—as well as in insurance and lotteries, it should be equally capable of rationalizing the choice between alternative social policies for the colonies.

The intended parallel between the choice of social policy for a new colony by its promoters and the choice of a social policy for an existing social order by a legislature is obvious. There is, however, one important difference:  $U_G$  is influenced to the maximum possible extent by whatever preference or aversion for uncertainty per se is present in the preference scheme of the individuals concerned, whereas this element is largely absent when policy decisions are limited to changing the income distribution without disturbing the ranking of individuals in a rigidly stratified and immobile society, as when the only question is one of setting income-tax rates; changes in policy will then have little or no effect on the range of uncertainty of individual income expectations. The importance of this divergence between a policy based on  $U_G$  and a policy appropriate to a given situation will depend on the degree of social mobility prevailing: in effect the colonial example presented was at the extreme of social mobility, for there was explicitly

assumed to be no evidence available at the moment of decision as to where the individual would land in the eventual distribution of incomes. Thus the use of  $U_G$  as a standard for social policy would be somewhat more appropriate in a highly mobile society, such as that of the United States, than in a more rigidly stratified society like that of India.

In one respect, however,  $U_G$  is essentially inadequate in guiding social-welfare policy, whether of a prospective colony or of an existing and stable social order: it takes no explicit account of external economies and diseconomies of income dispersion, such as are evidenced by the attention accorded Buckingham Palace and Hollywood. This factor of vicarious enjoyment or entertainment, to the extent that it is conceded to be legitimate rather than one to be dismissed as an impure or unworthy sort of satisfaction, would appear to call for an income distribution slightly more dispersed in the upper ranges and less so in the lower ranges than would otherwise be indicated. But then none of the utility functions that have as arguments only the income or other personal circumstances of the individual would take this factor into account, whereas  $U_G$  in principle would, as would probably  $U_B$ .

#### *Conclusions*

Where does all this leave us? I cannot help feeling that of all the utility functions proposed,  $U_G$  is the only one that holds out any strong hope for reasonably reliable measurement, though even here the reliability to be expected leaves much to be desired. With  $U_G$  it is at least possible, though difficult, to motivate serious answers by promising to turn a hypothetical choice into a real one upon the occurrence of some random event with a suitable positive (but not necessarily measurable) probability. How far the investigator could or should go, pragmatically or ethically, in misrepresenting this probability to the subject, or in promising more than could or would be carried out in the event of a specified occurrence, is a question that may be crucial in deciding whether or not adequate motivation can be provided in this way at a cost that

will be within the limits set by the value of the derived information.

The experiment, to be meaningful, would have to be on a full scale covering a significant range of lifetime incomes. Experiments of the Mosteller-Nogee type,<sup>6</sup> carried on at full "strength" (that is, 100 percent execution of choices) but on a very limited scale in terms of income range, carry little weight for major policy decisions on income distribution, and must be regarded as merely pilot studies. For example, the fact that one group of subjects showed increasing marginal utility over the range covered by the experiment can, I think, be considered a merely local phenomenon. The behavior of a group of college students, showing significantly declining marginal utility, is in a sense more disturbing: the number whose behavior was consistent with the nearly linear utility one would expect over the narrow range of the experiment was very small. Such results cast doubt on the extent to which the procedure induces choice in accordance with perceived orthodoxy or perhaps with an extreme short-run point of view. This is the more so in that the experiment in question involved possible losses of only \$.05 per choice, or \$1 per session, as compared to gains of \$10 in some instances. For a subject in an extremely illiquid position it is much easier to rationalize sharply increasing short-run utility in terms of a crucial opportunity for using \$10 that will be missed if not availed of immediately than it is to rationalize a sharply declining utility in the face of the evident possibility of setting the \$10 aside until a good use can be found for it.

In any case, I think it would be feasible to carry out a sufficiently persuasive inquiry along  $U_6$  lines. If the results were to persist in showing an increasing marginal utility I would be induced to conclude that my own introspectively evaluated utility function differs fundamentally from that of the bulk of my fellows, and that my egalitarian predilections are a personal prejudice that is

<sup>6</sup> Frederick Mosteller and Philip Nogee, "An Experimental Measurement of Utility," in *Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 59 (October 1951) pp. 371-404.

insufficiently generally held to warrant the espousal of a corresponding policy as an acceptable social choice. I might indeed look hard for loopholes before retreating in such fashion, but, given the facts, I think I could be forced to retreat eventually, rather than merely declaring my neutrality with an invocation of "de gustibus non disputandum est" or a sour-grapes comment that I really had something else in mind all the time.

Of course all of this says nothing about the vexing matter of interpersonal comparisons. The colonization example evades this issue by its assumption of identical tastes and complete long-run mobility. But the problem of interpersonal comparisons, together with the operationally insignificant aspects of a related problem—that is, whether there is any relation whatever between  $U_G$ , on the one hand, or any other  $U$  that economists may play with, and, on the other hand, contentment, joy, happiness, peace of mind, or any other concepts of absolute individual human felicity—had best be left, I think, to theologians and metaphysicians, until such time as someone thinks up a new way of defining them operationally. There are also other intractable problems that economists will be generally glad to leave to others. For example, if A is shown to be a less efficient "pleasure machine" than B, congenitally and through no fault of his own, should utility be maximized by concentrating income in the hands of B, or should A be compensated for this misfortune by giving him a larger share?

Indeed, justice, like beauty, is often in the eye of the beholder, and if Justice Holmes could declare that criminals should be punished in the same spirit that conscripts are sent into battle, not to mete out justice but to preserve society, then cardinal measurement of utility becomes relevant to social policy only to the extent that the use of this concept contributes to social stability. This in turn comes close to saying that utility is what people who are concerned about utility (by whatever name) think it is. For the present, I consider that  $U_G$  has as much cardinality and relevance for purposes of determining social policy as any measure of individual economic welfare we are likely to find.

## FORUM

### *"The Acquisitive Urge": Comment*

IN COMMENTING on Dr. van der Kroef's interesting article,<sup>1</sup> I must, to begin with, disclaim any but the most superficial knowledge of the Indonesian world. Were his an article on a strictly anthropological theme, this ignorance would automatically disqualify me from expressing an opinion. But the subject matter is of general concern, and Dr. van der Kroef's thesis has potentially far-reaching implications, not only for a theory of economic growth but for development policy as well. The thesis is succinctly stated: "Whatever the psychological motivation, a certain degree of individual or collective acquisitiveness, in the sense of a desire for the material aspects of the modernization process, is probably indispensable to the success of the economic development schemes being carried out in various parts of the world today" (p. 37). He goes on to state that "The presence or absence, and the character, of such an acquisitive tendency in the indigenous society can affect the development process so significantly that the existing pattern of cultural dynamics should receive close preliminary analysis before any modernization is contemplated."

To give weight to his contention, Dr. van der Kroef analyzes the acquisitive tendencies in the social structures of three relatively minor cultural subgroups of the Malayan Archipelago: the Mejbrat, a Papuan group in the Lake Ajamaru region of Dutch-held West New Guinea; the Saminists, a tiny religious sect located in North-Central Java; and the Batak of the Lake Toba region in North-Central Sumatra. This choice of examples immediately poses the question of the frame of reference appropriate to a discussion of the thesis.

One approach frequently used by economists in the study of macroeconomic growth distinguishes three interrelated parameters and levels of integration: the local, regional, and national. Professor van der Kroef has obviously selected the local level, where subcultural patterns are most significant in influencing economic behavior. Not only this, but his study leaves some doubt whether he means his examples to be representative of larger social structures or to be considered for themselves alone. The Mejbrat of New Guinea, a very primitive tribal group living under the "benevolent" order of Dutch colonial administration, would appear to be a rather exceptional case. In fact, it could be argued that the concept of economic development

<sup>1</sup> Justus M. van der Kroef, "The Acquisitive Urge: A Problem in Cultural Change," in *Social Research*, vol. 28, no. 1 (Spring 1961) pp. 37-59.

cannot be applied to them at all. The case may have considerable interest for those who would engage in "taming" scattered forest tribes in the jungles of Africa, South America, and Asia, but it is largely irrelevant, I think, to a discussion of the theory of economic growth.

The Saminists are an equally exceptional group, even in the context of traditional Javanese rural society. For about seventy years since the founding of their movement, they have remained a self-contained religious sect, practicing a form of primitive communism in their daily lives, engaging in civil disobedience (at least while they were under the Dutch), and following a predominantly ascetic-spiritual ideal. Yet, despite their other-worldly values, they have grown fairly prosperous, though their numbers have increased only moderately—from 2300 families in 1917 to about 5000 today. They would therefore not appear to have made many converts since the first decade of this century; indeed, they are locally known as the "aloof people" and, according to Dr. van der Kroef, are left alone by their contemporaries in Javanese society. In many ways they remind one of the Hutterites, both in this country and in Canada, whose life could be described in somewhat similar language. But are the Hutterites to any extent important for gaining insights into the economic growth of, say, the United States? In a national perspective they may be easily ignored without distorting the conclusions of analysis.

The Batak, whose home is in North-Central Sumatra, are somewhat different from the other two examples given. The difference stems from the fact that they appear to have exerted a certain national influence by migrating to cities and accepting city jobs in trade, industry, and government. For an understanding of what is happening today in Indonesia, an analysis of Batak culture would therefore be revealing; their "urge to acquisitiveness," derived from a highly differentiated, competitive social structure, may have a hand in shaping the future pattern of Indonesian society.

But, above all, it is the movement of the Batak to the cities that needs to be emphasized. It is in the cities that economic growth primarily takes place; and the resulting dualistic society, far from retarding economic growth, as claimed by Dr. van der Kroef, is precisely the ecological matrix within which such growth has to occur.<sup>2</sup> Growth, in the language of Hirschman, proceeds by way of an *unbal-*

<sup>2</sup> See John Friedmann, "Regional Planning: A Problem in Spatial Integration," in *Regional Science Association, Papers and Proceedings*, vol. 5 (1959) pp. 167-79; also my forthcoming study on "Cities in Social Transformation," in the international quarterly *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (1961).

anced development of resources, by leads and lags.<sup>3</sup> What happens locally, in the towns and villages of the countryside, is not likely to be decisive for the economic growth of a nation, at least not during the initial stages. Ultimately, of course, a maturing economy will have to achieve national integration—political no less than social and economic—through an expansion of urban values and institutions over rural areas.<sup>4</sup> But by the time this happens, many of the supposed local impediments to "progress" may have vanished into air. Enclaves of economic backwardness may continue to exist for a long time without substantially holding back advances in the capitalistic sector. Such enclaves exist even today in the United States, although the situation here is rapidly changing. But the end result of a drive to cumulative growth is a more or less stable space economy, as described by Walter Isard, in which the major role in organizing the economy, both as a pattern of activities and as a pattern in space, falls to the city.<sup>5</sup> Just as Karl Mannheim spoke of fundamental democratization as one of the major tendencies of our age, so one may speak of fundamental urbanization as the final outcome of modern economic growth. If this picture should prove to be an essentially correct representation of the underlying processes, it is probably more important to know about the characteristics of the urban intelligentsia than about an obscure ethnic group in the backwoods.<sup>6</sup> It is primarily among the intellectuals that one finds the carriers of modern Western values.<sup>7</sup>

With reference to a largely pre-industrial society a question one might ask is who, after all, desires "economic development." In gathering the replies, one discovers that peasants and workers attach little importance to the abstract idea of economic growth. In fact, they may tenaciously oppose it. But are they therefore lacking in "acquisitive urge"? Far from it. Peasants will want a stable market and

<sup>3</sup> Albert O. Hirschman, *The Strategy of Economic Development* (New Haven 1958), especially Chapters 7 and 10. See also Gunnar Myrdal, *Economic Theory and Underdeveloped Regions* (London 1957) Chapters 3-10.

<sup>4</sup> See John Friedmann, "Influence de l'intégration du système social sur le développement économique," in *Diogène*, no. 33 (January-March 1961) pp. 80-104.

<sup>5</sup> Walter Isard, *Location and Space Economy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956).

<sup>6</sup> See John Friedmann, "Intellectuals in Developing Societies," in *Kyklos*, vol. 13, fascicle 4 (1960) pp. 513-44; also Edward Shils, "The Intellectual Between Tradition and Modernity: The Indian Situation," Supplement 1 of *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (1961).

<sup>7</sup> An especially interesting account may be found in the intellectual autobiography of Soetan Sjahrir, the first Prime Minister of the Republic of Indonesia, *Out of Exile* (New York 1949).

higher prices for their crops. They may want a village well or a bridge built. They may want a school or a hospital. They will certainly make known their desire for cheap credit in sizable amounts. Workers in urban occupations will want inflation to be checked (specifically, the price of bread or rice to go down); they will want schooling for their children, a roof over their heads that doesn't leak, increase in wages, shorter hours, perhaps more cinemas. In fine, both peasants and workers will want very concrete and specific things for themselves. They do not think of these in terms of the "larger" picture; they do not, for example, think through the logical contradictions of their separate individual desires. But they want their lives to be better by whatever images they have of the good life. (Incidentally, their difficulty in understanding the processes by which they may obtain these benefits is a source of a great deal of trouble in carrying out development programs.)

For the intellectuals it will be a different matter altogether. They are not afraid to use the imagery of growth. To them, economic development is likely to appear as a symbol of national identity and independence, foreshadowing a weighty voice in the councils of the world. It is a matter of national shame to them to be considered "backward," a matter of national pride to undergo "development" and point to ever rising indices. They may be personally acquisitive, but this is clearly secondary to their more basic political orientation. They will usually borrow their model of development from the West, though they may alter it to some degree to make it fit to local circumstances. In so doing, they will have to discover their uniquely national style. And having found it, they will formulate—if there should be any promise of success—national purposes and goals toward which their efforts and the efforts of their countrymen may be directed. The *mystique* of economic development will go a long way toward providing a motivational structure conducive to growth.

It is significant, I think, that inevitably the intellectuals' emphasis will be on national objectives, on a national point of view; this emphasis is what provides the basis for the future integration of society on a truly national level. It is equally significant that the dimension of their thinking is therefore to be found along a continuum spanning the opposing poles of individualism and collectivism. While they may wish to encourage private enterprise in certain sectors of the economy, their thought also envisions a common destiny in which private and local interests must be subordinated to the overriding interests of the collective "we."

The presumed importance of an "acquisitive urge" stems largely from the economist's identification of economic development with cumulative growth in the gross product of the nation (GNP). Belief in the possibility of unlimited economic expansion presupposes a belief in the existence of insatiable human wants. Indeed, such wants are put as a condition of success. But there is also widespread agreement among students of economic growth that such a pattern of development is possible only for an elite of nations that have the requisite resources, skills, and organizational powers. It may perhaps be a goal realistically attainable for China, Japan, India, and Brazil, among others; it is doubtful whether the Republic of Chad, Afghanistan, or, for that matter, Western New Guinea, can similarly aspire.

This admittedly theoretical consideration raises a question that is pertinent for all newly developing nations. Is the Western pattern of cumulative growth the only pattern to be followed? Do there not exist other goal patterns for economic growth that may be equally desirable without exceeding the resource capacities of the nation? Suppose welfare parameters were substituted more freely for GNP as a criterion of progress. Suppose the concept of a development "in depth" became popular (because ultimately the more realistic for many countries). This concept has so far received very little attention, and deserves to be further explored. It means putting emphasis on quality instead of on quantity—not that the latter is unimportant, but that the former is more important. Rediscovery of a nation's historical heritage might be a first step in this direction. The attainment of a carefully designed "minimum adequate standard of living" in terms of indigenous values and possibilities might be a first objective.

Under such a "development in depth" approach to economic growth, would it still be necessary to postulate an "acquisitive urge"? There is indeed the "demonstration effect" to contend with, but sooner or later the non-Western intellectuals may take in earnest the criticism leveled against contemporary European civilization by their Western colleagues. Surely it is paradoxical that Western values should sweep the world just at a time when Western intellectuals have begun to lose faith in the work of their own making. And when the Asian or African intellectual awakens to this paradox, he may well be moved to reconsider his initial premises and strive to formulate values and goals that are not vitiated in the process of achieving them.

Thus we may return to Dr. van der Kroef's thesis of the acquisitive urge. It has not, I believe, been proved conclusively. That it under-

lies much current economic thinking cannot be disputed, though some, like John Kenneth Galbraith, are beginning to have second thoughts about it. On the other hand, its relevance to the process of economic growth can be questioned within the context of another frame of reference—that of national development—than that adopted by Professor van der Kroef.

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*Rejoinder*

I SHALL confine my remarks to the points in Dr. Friedmann's comment which appear to me directly relevant to my article, and leave out of consideration such matters as "space economy," the role of urban intelligentsias, the "very concrete and specific things" wanted by (all?) peasants and workers, the "uniquely national style" of development, the place of gross national product, the alleged "second thoughts" of John Kenneth Galbraith, and so on.

A characteristic of our time is the emergence of independent states that can sometimes be considered nations only in a remote cultural sense, even more rarely in an economic sense. In these areas we encounter a mosaic of local social-economic systems with their unique dynamics; we do not meet, except in a most superficial sense, what could be considered a "national" economy. This is the condition in parts of Africa and Asia. It is the case in West New Guinea and to a lesser extent in Indonesia. If national economic development is ever to get under way in such areas, the manner in which these diverse and often self-contained systems are to be linked together and to become integrated must receive paramount consideration. Thus the case of the Mejbrat, far from being irrelevant to a discussion of the theory of economic growth, as Dr. Friedmann believes, may add to our knowledge of how local systems can or cannot be integrated in the process of economic growth. And a theory of economic growth that does not take the problem of the Mejbrat into consideration, and similar problems in other Papuan societies, would, for one thing, be rather meaningless when applied to the West New Guinea region or to the eventual West New Guinea "national" economy.

If Dr. Friedmann would but consider the social-economic value system of the traditional Javanese village he would not make the mis-

take of comparing Saminism to the insignificant role of the Hutterites in the economic growth of the United States. The spiritualized communalistic values of Saminism not only underlie the whole of the existing "national" Indonesian peasant economy today, but what is more, they are stressed by "national" Indonesian leaders as the basis for what is now termed "Indonesian socialism."<sup>1</sup> Ancient and modern collectivist values are thus to be combined, with consequences that, as I have indicated elsewhere, appear to be detrimental to a more dynamic "national" economic growth.<sup>2</sup> In a real sense Saminism is an accentuation of regional economic values, which collide sharply with other values in Indonesia, a collision with all manner of political consequences visible in the struggle between Java and the other areas of Indonesia.

Dr. Friedmann writes: "the resulting dualistic society, far from retarding economic growth, as claimed by Dr. van der Kroef, is precisely the ecological matrix within which such growth has to occur." I agree that the dualistic society is the framework within which growth has to occur, but it is a little surprising to me to read that the dualistic society does not retard economic growth. Here I can only refer Dr. Friedmann to the by now voluminous literature, especially to the works of the late J. H. Boeke,<sup>3</sup> which totally contradict Dr. Friedmann's contention, certainly in so far as Indonesia is concerned.

Dr. Friedmann writes that "it is probably more important to know about the characteristics of the urban intelligentsia than about an obscure ethnic group in the backwoods." Probably it is well that those who are concerned with economic development in the West New Guinea area—to stick with that region for the present—evidently do not share his view.

<sup>1</sup> See the remarks of Ruslan Abdulgani (Vice-Chairman, Supreme Advisory Council) on Saminism and "Indonesian Socialism," in *Mimbar Indonesia* (Djakarta), July 23, 1960.

<sup>2</sup> J. M. van der Kroef, "Problems of Economic Motivation and Development in Rural Indonesia," in *Social and Economic Studies*, vol. 7 (1958) pp. 193-209.

<sup>3</sup> J. H. Boeke, *Dorpsherstel* (Haarlem 1952); *Economics and Economic Policy of Dual Societies as Exemplified by Indonesia* (New York 1953); "Three Forms of Disintegration in Dual Societies," in *Indonesie*, vol. 7 (1954) pp. 278-95. See also N. J. Feldmann, *De Overheidsmiddelen van Indonesië in verband met de Dualistische Economie* (Leyden 1949), especially pp. 135-86; A. H. Ballendux, *Bijdrage tot de Kennis van de Credietverlening aan de 'Indonesische Middenstand'* (The Hague 1951).

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## FORUM

### *Is the Public Debt a Burden on Future Generations?*

AS POINTED OUT in a note by W. G. Bowen, R. G. Davis, and D. H. Kopf in the *American Economic Review* of September 1960, with comments and reply in the March 1961 issue of the same journal, the majority of American textbook writers agree that the real burden of a public project financed by a privately held internal debt cannot be shifted from one generation to another. Their reasoning seems to be that it is always current income, or better, currently available resources, that must bear the burden of the project. This is, indeed, an astonishing argument in times in which the level of welfare, whether for individuals or for the community, is usually defined in terms of consumption and not of "income," and in a period when a major concern of scholars is the conditions of economic growth. The three authors rightly take issue with the conventional position, but it seems to me that the following considerations offer a somewhat simpler refutation than the arguments they bring forward, and at the same time may clarify certain points not touched on by them.

At the outset it should be noted that the "burden" economists usually refer to a *net* burden. Obviously, if a public debt is undertaken to finance investment in enterprises whose products will be sold to the public at a price sufficient to cover also the interest on the debt incurred, nobody would even discuss the question whether this transaction implies a burden on future generations. The real difficulty arises from "public projects" that, although they are "useful" also for future generations or even indirectly contribute to the productivity of the private sector (for example, by leading to the application of new production techniques), do not by themselves furnish the means for defraying the interest on the newly assumed public debt. Though the existence of these non-marketable services to future generations may justify shifting the burden to them, if such a shift is possible, this is not the point at issue. The question is whether the government borrowing required for the investment indeed affects only the present economy.

An increase in taxation reduces not only saving (as generally conceded in the theory of the balanced-budget multiplier) but also consumption. In a fully utilized economy, an equivalent increase in government borrowing would affect only the amount of investible funds available to the private sector, except for the negligible amount

by which a higher interest rate stimulated private saving. Hence the stock of real capital available to the "future generations"—those who live after the period of extra government expenditures—would be smaller under borrowing than under taxation. In addition, future capital stock may be affected by a diversion of current depreciation allowances: the operational lifetime of a piece of equipment or a building is usually longer than the depreciation lifetime used by accountants, and therefore replacement can be postponed without reducing the capital stock in operation. Since effective means are not known for increasing the propensity to save (voluntarily), the maximum burden shifted to future generations is thus the sum of the current saving potential and the current depreciation allowance. Any extra government expenditure beyond this limit must be borne by the present generation, through curtailment of consumption via either taxes or inflation.

This principle, however, holds only when the condition of full utilization is satisfied. When it is not, there are two situations in which government borrowing does *not* imply a burden on the future. First, if the inducement to invest is inelastic, private investment may fall short of the saving potential, even at the lowest possible interest rate, and thus government borrowing would not reduce private investment in the way described above. And second, if current private investment, though equal to the saving potential, is so high that a further appropriate increase (by something like the Harrod-Domar growth rate) cannot be expected, and that therefore underutilization is likely in subsequent periods, current government borrowing will not reduce future income and consumption.

If the present generation shouldered the full burden of the extra expenditure, future generations would of course be likely to enjoy a higher level of income, consumption, or satisfaction than the present one. But to say that the burden of current outlay will be shifted to future generations does not imply a future level of these variables that is *lower* than the present. To see clearly how the burden is equalized, assumptions from the realm of welfare economics may be introduced, as for example Ramsay's famous mathematical theory of saving. If we disregard the ways that changes in income distribution affect satisfaction, and make the usual Harrod-Domar assumptions concerning constancy of the saving ratio and the productivity of capital, then it is not difficult to work out an equalization formula—assuming that the government expenditure keeps within the limits indicated above (current saving potential plus current depreciation allowance).

Let us, in a first approximation, neglect population growth, technological progress, and the interest payable on the government borrowing. Then during the period of extra government expenditure, the loss of investment in the private sector ( $dI_0$ ), as caused by the increase in government expenditure ( $dG_0$ ), is expressed as follows:  $dI_0 = -sdT_0 - d(G_0 - T_0)$ , where  $dT_0$  is the revenue from additional taxation and  $s$  is the saving ratio. The consumption sacrifice is  $dC_0 = -(1-s)dT_0$ . Because of the reduction of investment in the period of extra government expenditure, income ( $Y$ ) will be lowered in period 1 in accordance with the formula  $dY_1 = (sdT_0 + dG_0 - dT_0)/v$ , with  $v$  representing the capital coefficient, and consumption will decline in accordance with  $dC_1 = -(1-s)(sdT_0 + dG_0 - dT_0)/v$ . The consumption losses will be equalized if  $dT_0/dG_0 = 1/(v - s + 1)$ . The longer the period of extra expenditure, the smaller  $v$  and the larger  $dT_0/dG_0$ , in conformity with common sense. (For a period of a year, in which  $v = 3$  and  $s = .1$ , we have  $dT_0/dG_0 = 10/39$ .)

To take account of the neglected factors could not greatly affect  $dT_0/dG_0$  and would never increase it. For expenditures within the limits indicated, the interest-rate effect can only be small. Population growth would, to be sure, require a higher capital stock in subsequent periods than is implied in the final equation, and hence more investment and less government borrowing in the actual expenditure period. But the effect of increasing productivity, whether from technological progress or from capital intensification, would work in the opposite direction, and has typically been much stronger than that of population growth.

It may be worth while to close with a few remarks on the main strands of thinking in the literature on the problems discussed here. According to John Stuart Mill (*Principles of Political Economy*, Book I, Chapter 4, paragraph 8), it was Dr. G. Chalmers who first set forth what is now the textbook argument, that "whatever is spent cannot but be drawn from yearly income" (from Chalmers' writings in the New York Public Library I have not been able to trace the source of this statement). Mill had some reservations, but on the whole his argument makes too much use of his wage-fund theory to be relevant here.

The effect that such government expenditures exert on growth had already been discussed by Ricardo (in his article "Funding System," reprinted in *Works*, 1951, vol. 4). He was primarily interested in the desirability of financing such expenditures by taxes and not by loans, on the grounds that taxation induces an equivalent, or at least a

partial, reduction in current consumption (pp. 184, 187). It would follow that borrowing, assumed not to restrict consumption, would affect the stock of capital and thus the level of future production (p. 184), and hence would be a burden on future generations. Unfortunately Ricardo confused the issue by asking (p. 187): "Where is the difference, whether somebody leaves to his son 20,000 pounds with the tax [necessary to pay the interest on the loan] still in force, or 19,000 pounds without it [in case the extra expense was defrayed by extra taxation]?" In other words, he here assumes that in case of taxation and no borrowing, the tax would fall exclusively on saving, with the result that posterity would suffer, regardless of the financing chosen.

During the nineteenth century, economists never lost sight of the growth aspect. Two German authors may be singled out for mention: F. Nebenius (1829) and C. Bernoulli (1839), excerpts of whose writings are conveniently accessible in K. Diehl and Mombert, *Ausgewählte Lesestücke* (vol. 16, 1923, p. 253). No clear analysis was possible, however, before the introduction of the consumption function and the capital coefficient. C. Dietzel (1855) represents one extreme by holding that any burden on a future generation is offset by the advantages accruing to it from the use of the borrowed funds by the present generation. The discussion in A. C. Pigou, *A Study in Public Finance* (1928, Part III, Chapter 1, especially pp. 5-13), misses the decisive point by not distinguishing clearly between gross and net burden.

The necessity of distinguishing between a fully utilized and an underutilized economy seems to have been stated first, though in imperfect formulation, by Adolph Wagner in his contribution to Schoenberg's *Handbuch der politischen Ökonomie* (vol. 3, fourth ed. 1897, reprinted in Diehl-Mombert, p. 257). Wagner contended that loans from disposable domestic capital—that is, funds that at the time of borrowing are not productively used and hence lie idle—"do not withdraw capital from production and employment, and therefore do not reduce either directly."

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## ORDER AND HISTORY

ALTHOUGH three volumes of Eric Voegelin's monumental study of the order of history and the history of order have now been available for some years, discussions of them have all too often been vitiated by being primarily critiques of the critics' misconceptions. In order to supply at least a partial corrective for this situation it may be worth while to attempt a concise formulation of some of the central motifs in this most profound and original reconstruction of political thought since Hegel.<sup>1</sup>

For purposes of professional taxonomy, *Order and History* is properly to be regarded as a philosophy of history. "The existence of man in political society is historical existence; and a theory of politics, if it penetrates to principles, must at the same time be a theory of history." This sentence opened Voegelin's earlier *New Science of Politics* (Chicago 1952), which is an "Introduction" to the larger work considered here. Paramount among the conditions to be met before the "new science" could become reality was this: "The understanding of ontology as well as the craftsmanship of metaphysical speculation had to be regained, and especially philosophical anthropology as a science had to be re-established" (*New Science of Politics*, p. 25; note also pp. 22 ff.). The present work bears witness that this condition has been fulfilled, for it articulates a new ontology and both terms in its title denote ontological concepts. At the level of detail, these volumes are also highly competent and informative studies of specialized problems, such as the Old Testament as paradigmatic history, the theology of the pre-Socratic thinkers, the political theory of Plato and Aristotle. Chapters dealing with the "Suffering Servant" of Deutero-Isaiah, Homer, the *Republic*, or Aristotle's *Politics* (among others) could stand alone as intimate studies of their subjects.

While Voegelin's work is encyclopaedic, it is no encyclopaedia. It deals in intellectual history, but it is a history neither of "ideas" nor of "political theory"; since such a work was long ago promised, it is perhaps excusable that some of Voegelin's colleagues in their reviews have mistaken the present volumes for it. Although Voegelin here formulates a philosophy of history, he erects no historical "sys-

<sup>1</sup> Eric Voegelin. *Order and History*, 3 vols. of a projected 6 vol. work. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press. Vol. 1, *Israel and Revelation*, 1956, xxv & 533 pp., \$7.50. Vol. 2, *The World of the Polis*, 1957, xviii & 389 pp., \$6. Vol. 3, *Plato and Aristotle*, 1957, vii & 383 pp., \$6.

tem" such as that of Hegel, for example. Again, in sheer magnitude and amplitude, *Order and History* surpasses Spengler's *Decline of the West* and approaches Toynbee's *Study of History*, but it does not come to the subject matter of history with a preconceived sweeping hypothesis, which all the data must somehow be tailored to fit. Nor, lastly, is this simply another gigantic historiographic enterprise of chiefly antiquarian interest. Rather, it is a philosophic undertaking consciously like that of Plato: "an inquiry into the structure of the order in which we live presently," whose purpose is to diagnose the nature and causes of the crisis of our times and prescribe a remedy for it. "Philosophy," says Voegelin (vol. 1, p. xiv), "is the love of being through love of divine Being as the source of its order. The Logos of being is the object proper of philosophical inquiry; and the search for truth concerning the order of being cannot be conducted without diagnosing the modes of existence in untruth. The truth of order has to be gained and regained in the perpetual struggle against the fall from it; and the movement toward truth starts from a man's awareness of his existence in untruth. The diagnostic and therapeutic functions are inseparable in philosophy as a form of existence. And, ever since Plato, in the disorder of his time, discovered the connection, philosophical inquiry has been one of the means of establishing islands of order in the disorder of the age."

The fundamental canon of interpretation relied on by Voegelin is made explicit in the opening sentence of his Preface: "The order of history emerges from the history of order." This is then explained (vol. 1, p. ix): ". . . while there is no simple pattern of progress or cycles running through history, its process is intelligible as a struggle for true order. This intelligible structure of history . . . is not a project for human or social action, but a reality to be discerned retrospectively in a flow of events that extends, through the present of the observer, indefinitely into the future. Philosophers of history have spoken of this reality as providence . . . or as *List der Vernunft*. . . . In either case they referred to a reality beyond the plans of concrete human beings—a reality of which the origin and end is unknown and which for that reason cannot be brought within the grasp of finite action."

In the two 1957 volumes this approach was reaffirmed and further elaborated. As Voegelin put it (vol. 2, p. 7): "A study that wants to be critical must take seriously the fact that the truth about the order of being emerges in the order of history . . . a philosophy of history cannot be an amiable record of memorabilia, in the hope that

the passions which have caused phenomena of the past to survive in the memory of mankind were judicious in their choice. It must be a critical study of the authoritative structure in the history of mankind. Neither can the authoritative communications of truth about order, as they have sprung up in the course of history, be sympathetically accepted on an equal footing—for that would submerge us in the evils of historicism, in skepticism and relativism; nor can they be rejected by the standards of an ultimate truth, whether such ultimacy be attributed to a truth of the past or a new one discovered by ourselves—for such absolutism would involve the gnostic fallacy of declaring the end of history. . . . The Logos of history itself provides the instruments for the critical testing and ranking of the authoritative structure. For, without the leap in being that brings God and man into their mutual presence, without the creation of history as the inner form of existence in opposition to the cosmological form of order, there would be no problem of a history of mankind; and without the discovery of the logos in the psyche and the world, without the creation of philosophical existence, the problem of history would not be a problem of philosophy. Hence, the manifold of authorities must be critically measured, and their relative rank can be determined, by the degrees of approximation to the clarity of historical consciousness and of penetration to the order of the psyche and the world."

The task thus undertaken by Voegelin is to discern in the vast flow of history the symbolic forms by which man has ordered his personal and political existence, and to analyze and classify the content of these symbolisms by penetrating through them to the engendering experiences they explicate. Out of the order of history thereby critically established, there emerges also the truth about the order of being. The indicated *methodos* entails not only technical philosophical competence but also the spiritual sensitivity and the virtuosity necessary to reenact within one's self the fundamental ordering experiences that have happened to men in the entire course of human history.

This stupendous enterprise has been carried to brilliant completion in the areas of the ancient Near East, Israel, and Hellas. The source materials with which the scholar has dealt range from the Memphite Theology, the Code of Hammurabi, and the Old Testament to Minoan Linear B inscriptions, Hesiod, the pre-Socratic fragments, the extant works of the Hellenic dramatists, historians, and philosophers. Also an impressive body of secondary and tertiary source

material and of monographic and critical studies has been assimilated; in particular, the author has mastered the immense literature of Biblical criticism and the scholarly staples of Greek philology and philosophy. Voegelin has made clear his acknowledgment of indebtedness to modern scholarship: "Science is not the singlehanded achievement of this or that individual scholar; it is a co-operative effort" (*New Science of Politics*, p. 23). His individual achievement is nonetheless substantial. Out of his welter of materials have come three tightly written, closely reasoned volumes. The level of the presentation is that of a *philosophia perennis*, and no quarter is given what the author designates as contemporary "theoretical illiteracy" or what Niemeyer describes as "the state of his readers' minds."

From his inquiry, Voegelin concludes that two contrasting (but also overlapping) existential forms are discernible: the Cosmological Form, in which cosmic-divine being is experienced as the source of order in the world and which finds expression in the symbolic form of the myth; and Historical Form, achieved through revelation in Israel and through philosophy in Hellas, which emerges when the primal form is "broken" by the "leap in being." The leap in being designates man's discovery, through spiritual experience, that divine transcendent Being is the ultimate source of order for man, society, world, and being (vol. 1, pp. 123, 235). The ancient Near Eastern empires (and all "First Generation" civilizations, to use Toynbee's term) existed in Cosmological Form.

Israel, in the Exodus, first broke the Cosmological Form through the revelation to Moses on Mount Sinai. This was a representative act, taken by Moses for Israel, and by Israel, as the Chosen People, for all mankind. History was created by Israel on this occasion (vol. 1, p. 115): "Without Israel there would be no history, only the eternal recurrence of societies in cosmological form" (vol. 1, p. 126); "history is the revelation of the way of God with man" (vol. 1, p. 128). The symbolic form in which the revelation finds expression, and which constitutes the community "Israel" as an entity in history, is the paradigmatic historical narrative, that is, the Old Testament. In Hellas, the Cosmological Form was broken only gradually, in the arduous path from Homer through Aeschylus and Marathon (vol. 2, p. 263) to culmination in the philosophy of Plato. Three principles are seen to govern the process by which experiences of order differentiate: "(1) The nature of man is constant. (2) The range of human experience is always present in the fullness of its dimensions. (3) The range varies from compactness to differentiation" (vol. 1, p. 60).

Finally, the ontological consequences of the differentiation of human experiences of order are stated as follows (vol. 1, pp. 464 ff.): "Existence in historical form presupposes the existence of the world-transcendent God, as well as the historical fact of his revelation. . . . History, once it has become ontologically real through revelation, carries with it the irreversible direction from compact existence in cosmological form toward the Kingdom of God. . . . One [can] not go back of revelation and play existence in cosmic-divine order, after the world-transcendent God [has] revealed himself. One [can] not pretend to live an another order of being than the one illuminated by revelation. And least of all [can] one think of going beyond revelation and replacing the constitution of being with a man-made substitute. Man exists *within* the order of being; and there is no history *outside* the historical form under revelation."

I have here stressed aspects of *Order and History* not generally given sufficient attention in discussions of the work published thus far, and perhaps it will be appropriate to close with a few words about that reception. In general, the theologians have viewed the work favorably, the philosophers critically, the political scientists with uneasiness. Of some sixty-five reviews and discussions that this reviewer has seen, the most perceptive have been Friedrich Engel-Janosi's essay in *Wort und Wahrheit* (vol. 13, no. 7, August-September 1958) and Gerhart Niemeyer's discussion of the second and third volumes in *Review of Politics* (vol. 21, no. 3, July 1959). One can be particularly grateful for Professor Niemeyer's emphasis (p. 593) on a point that is fundamental to any adequate appreciation of *Order and History*: "Voegelin's analysis of past achievements of order is meant to become the occasion for a rediscovery of order in our own age. The history of order is presented as an ultimately self-authenticating experience in the order of history, its authenticity founded [like, I would add, the *zetema* of Socrates in the *Republic*] in the responding soul of the reader."

Moses Hadas in the *Journal of the History of Ideas* (vol. 19, no. 3, June 1958) bitterly attacks the three volumes as a "hoax," and accuses Voegelin in such immoderate terms as "specious scaffolding," "disingenuousness," "calculated ambiguities," warning the "unwary reader" against the "pietistic coloring" of "his doctrine" and against the "nature of his work." The specific charge against Voegelin is that he is secretly advocating "'elitarian activism'" rather than "a return to religion," which is his pretension, and the review concludes with a quotation from Huey Long: "Sure, we'll have fascism in this

country, but of course we'll call it something else,'" to which Professor Hadas comments "Leap in being?" (p. 444). Most of Hadas' review is given over to so translating Voegelin's terms that the "unwary reader" can decipher this cryptogram and guard against its menace.

Two points are to be made here. In the first place, the term "leap in being," which is apparently the source of much of Hadas' animus, has been part of the philosophical vocabulary at least since Hegel, and is particularly prominent in the writings of Kierkegaard, from whom Voegelin has taken it; the suggestion that Voegelin has borrowed this term, and by implication also his metaphysical position, from Heidegger is pure conjecture unsupportable by the facts. And second, at a crucial point Hadas seeks to clinch his argument by quoting (p. 443) a passage in which Voegelin allegedly comes "nearest an explicit statement" that what the leap in being "really means is the masterful individual's sudden recognition of his own power, which he must then exercise to impose order on lesser men." Unfortunately, the sentence produced to prove this charge (from vol. 2, p. 186) is seriously misquoted by Hadas: an entire clause is omitted without indication of ellipsis, *the* is rendered *this*, and *authoritative* is made to read *authoritarian*. If a single sentence can be so completely misconstrued, is it any wonder that the cumulative error in understanding 1800 pages grew so large?

Interestingly enough, while Hadas (p. 443) has castigated, as supposedly Voegelin's, the view that the "Big Lie" of the *Republic* (414c-d) is a "device prescribed . . . for manipulating the governed" which elitist Voegelin heartily commends as "mandatory for one who has experienced the leap in being," Stanley Rosen complains in the *Review of Metaphysics* (vol. 12, no. 2, December 1958) that Voegelin is an "egalitarian" (pp. 271 ff.) who has not seen that the lie qua lie of the *gennaion pseudos* is, precisely, that all men are brothers. Rosen "rejects" the second and third volumes (p. 259). His critique is substantial and is urged along the two broad fronts of the nature of history and the nature of philosophy in Greek thought. His complex criticism cannot here be discussed in detail, but in general it appears that his objections, concentrated in the charge that Voegelin "excludes the possibility of a non-empiricist and non-mystical philosophy" (p. 268), are rooted in a thoroughgoing secularism that refuses to countenance any "transcendental moonshine" (to borrow A. E. Taylor's phrase) in discussions of Hellenic philosophy.

ELLIS SANDOZ

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## BOOK REVIEWS

MOWRER, O. HOBART. *Learning Theory and Behavior*. New York: John Wiley. 1960. xii & 555 pp. \$6.95.

This first of two volumes dealing with learning will undoubtedly be viewed as the major analytical and theoretical contribution to the subject since Clark L. Hull's *Principles of Behavior* appeared in 1943. It will be influential not only because the theory will serve as a stimulant for future research, but also because it is a summary, codification, and reinterpretation of research and thinking during the last twenty years. The book is theoretically, cognitively, and physiologically oriented, utilizing laboratory and real-life examples and constantly striving to provide meaning, relevance, and rationale to data. It is fair to say that no current volume on learning is comparable in the range of material handled. Professor Mowrer re-examines many of the most fundamental issues in the field, and attempts to come to grips with its problems, paradoxes, and inconsistencies.

The proposed theory of learning may be pigeonholed by describing it as a classical conditioning, homeostatic, emotional-drive, cognitive-neo-behavioristic approach. Of the sisters cognition (knowing), conation (willing), and affection (feeling), Mowrer clearly prefers the last, although it appears that the family resemblances often confuse him. Using the classical conditioning paradigm, he holds that learning is merely the attachment of neutral stimuli to emotional responses as a function of contiguity. There are two kinds of classical conditioning: one that occurs when a drive is reduced (decremental reinforcement, such as food, hope, relief); and one that occurs when a drive is induced (incremental reinforcement, such as electric shock, fear, disappointment). Of the five criteria that have been used in the past for identifying the emotions, the arousing situations form the basis of Mowrer's theory: he uses a situational definition of emotion. Thus, to cite his strongest area of support, when a stimulus is followed by a noxious event (electric shock), the emotion of fear is learned, or is conditioned to that stimulus. Fear then acts as a motivator, or an emotional drive, to direct, guide, and control behavior until a situation (stimulus) is encountered which reduces the fear. Situationally speaking, Mowrer identifies the emotions of hope, fear, disappointment, frustration, relief, anger, courage, and disgust.

Mowrer's theory is thus one long motivational dissertation. Whereas the hedonistic doctrine maintains that stimuli arouse distinctive sensations that are intrinsically pleasant or unpleasant, and the environmentalistic view maintains that motives are elicited by external stimuli (curiosity), Mowrer insists that all primary drives are inherently unpleasant and have in common the component of fear (hunger-fear, thirst-fear, and so on). From a homeostatic viewpoint, reward consists of the diminution of stimulation or drive (primary or secondary). And unlike Hull, for whom learning occurs only on rewarded trials, Mowrer contends that learning (relief, disappointment, frustration) occurs on non-rewarded trials. Unlearning is not due to forgetting or fatigue but to the learning of something else—an interference theory of unlearning.

Half a dozen faults, most of them major, can be found with Mowrer's theory and its presentation. For one, it is difficult to envisage theoretical progress emerging from a definitional muddle. In the reviewer's opinion, emotion, motivation, and cognition refer to different problems in experience, behavior, and biology. The proffered solution to problems cannot be acceptable when conditioning is conceptualized as the "development of certain perceptions, expectations, anticipations, meanings, emotions—these terms all being more or less equivalent" (p. 279), and when these are all postulated as visceral responses. Visceral responses, hormonal secretions, and cortical events cannot be considered identical.

In the second place, Mowrer identifies "habit" with secondary reinforcement. As was demonstrated in a recent review of the literature on secondary reward (J. L. Myers, in *Psychological Bulletin*, vol. 55, 1958, pp. 284-301), the phenomenon is inadequately defined and inadequately demonstrated, and "the use of secondary reinforcement as a foundation for any theory seems premature." Third, the critical problem of response initiation and selection is omitted. Since this is the major contribution of the American learning theorists, from Thorndike and Hull to the present day, its omission is enormous. The cognitive theorists have been lampooned for leaving the subject "lost in thought," and similarly Mowrer leaves it lost in emotion, by ignoring the mechanism of response selection.

A fourth objection is that the solutions offered for many of the fundamental problems are inadequate. Some are only restatements of the problem (learning to learn is merely transfer of common elements). Some do not account for the data (in attempting to handle temporal serial patterning in partial reinforcement, it is necessary to

attribute cognitive characteristics to the emotions). Others glue together alternative and contradictory interpretations in ad hoc fashion (thus the assumption that "hope" is reduction of drive stimulation necessitates accounting for the heightened excitability data of appetitive studies). And still others omit relevant contradictory data (although surgical and drug studies indicate that avoidance learning is weakened when "fear" is presumably eliminated, there are clear reports by Kluver and Bucy to show that with temporal lobe lesions "fear" is eliminated but there is an enormous increase in curiosity and visual exploration).

A further objection is that, in the reviewer's opinion, more refined measuring techniques, when available, will not substantiate Mowrer's theses that conditioned visceral responses (emotions) are identical with the unconditioned responses, and that the visceral response called "fear" is common to all drives. Finally, and on another level, it is painful to state that the book's repetitious detective-style writing is not conducive to clarity of exposition or dissemination of the theory. A strong editorial assist was clearly indicated, but unfortunately omitted.

In short, I do not believe that Professor Mowrer has presented us with an acceptable theory of learning. But his attempt to rekindle interest in the emotional aspects of motivation and learning is a welcome relief from those behaviorists for whom anything dealing with affection smacks of the subjective and introspective. He has enriched us by his honesty and integrity in focusing attention on central learning problems with which any theorist must (but not all have) come to grips. His cognitive analyses will assist future theorists.

JEROME WODINSKY

*Graduate Faculty of the New School*

**BLACK, CHARLES L., JR.** *The People and the Court: Judicial Review in a Democracy.* New York: Macmillan. vii & 238 pp. \$5.

Charles L. Black, Henry R. Luce Professor of Jurisprudence at Yale University, has here presented an "affirmative case" for judicial review in a democracy. At the very beginning he attempts to scotch the "lingering myth" that the power of the Supreme Court to invalidate an act of Congress is the result of a judicial usurpation—a task that is best accomplished, he believes, by appealing not to logic but to history. Thus Marshall's efforts to deduce this power from the necessary implications of a written constitution are rejected as inade-

quate, in favor of the more solid argument from positive authority—the original intention of the framers of the Constitution, the assumption of the Court from the beginning, and the expectation of the early Congresses. The author himself, however, sounds much like Marshall when he goes on to justify the Court in principle as the best if not the only institution for settling questions of constitutional legitimacy in a government of limited powers. Much less debatable is his demonstration that judicial review, as a matter of historical fact, has become so deeply rooted in our institutions that it could not now be excised without a profound if not disastrous shock to our basic notions of political legitimacy. Judicial review, in other words, has been not only a check on democratic power but the means of extending and confirming it.

But the major burden of this work is a refutation of "the notion, today widely held and impressively sponsored, that judicial virtue consists mainly or entirely in judicial restraint, that the only good Court is a dead Court" (p. 90). This attitude is traced in part to the insight of the legal realists that interpretation of a legal rule inevitably involves a moment of political discretion, which is properly the business of a legislature, in part to the conviction that the "hideous examples" of judicial legislation in the past, and above all in the New Deal period, can be avoided in the future only by a general presumption in favor of the constitutionality of governmental action.

Here again the author's rebuttal is almost too enthusiastic. He comes dangerously close at times to the old assumption that judges have some special virtue that enables them to "find" the law impartially. The more solid core of his reply is simply that dogmatic self-restraint, while accepting judicial review in form, destroys its substance in reality, and is thus a violation of the judge's duty. More specifically, the factor of political discretion in interpreting a rule is held to be so intimately bound up with the factor of objective meaning that the first component cannot be excluded without a total abdication of judicial power. A general presumption of constitutionality is open to the same objection, and there is a nice restatement of the liberal position that this is not a universal canon but depends on the nature of the rule. Where the Constitution grants power affirmatively, or recognizes its existence, the legislative act is not to be considered *ultra vires* unless the case is clear beyond a reasonable doubt. But where, as in the First Amendment, the language is a simple prohibition (Congress shall make no law . . .)

there is a presumption in favor of the right and against the claim of power to restrict it. Hence the liberal who supports a broad construction of economic powers cannot be accused of inconsistency in demanding vigorous judicial enforcement of the Bill of Rights.

Although not always persuasive in its larger claims, Professor Black's book presents a number of effective arguments for strong judicial action in the field of civil liberties. It is thus a welcome contribution to the morale of contemporary liberals.

JULIAN H. FRANKLIN

*Princeton University*

LEVIN, HARVEY J. *Broadcast Regulation and Joint Ownership of Media*. New York: New York University Press. 1960. xviii & 219 pp. \$4.50.

An economist investigates here a problem in public regulation of business which goes well beyond the customary boundaries of economics. Usually general problems of this nature are, lamentably, avoided by the specialists in the various academic disciplines. Levin investigates the merits of independent separate ownership of the major media of public communications (newspapers, movies, radio stations, and television stations) as opposed to "cross-channel ownership," that is, possession by one owner of outlets in the various media. In so doing he explores not only the economic factors but also the relevant non-economic considerations. Levin's topic is one that the Federal Communications Commission wrestles with; it is also of considerable concern to the judiciary, the Congress, and the entire nation.

The author develops his ideas carefully. He begins with a cautious statement of "the theoretical social benefits of separate ownership" (such as the promotion of accuracy, of fairness, of balance); presumably these are called theoretical because, though they are widely accepted, there is no way of measuring or "proving" their importance. Levin then examines cross-channel ownership, finding that it has developed chiefly from the fear of the older media that they will be economically crippled or destroyed by competition of the newer media. If this fear is valid, the social benefits of separate ownership may be outweighed by its social disadvantages, arising from economic enervation. The economic strength associated with cross-channel ownership, it is often argued, provides the vital financial resources necessary for a high-quality job of disseminating news and providing worthwhile cultural fare and entertainment. It is further

maintained that economic weakness increases the temptation to resort to sensationalism, fosters debased standards of morals, taste, and culture, increases the media's "susceptibility to pressures from organized groups," and otherwise reduces "the accuracy, fairness, and thoroughness of their performance" (p. 133).

The issue has now been posed in a form that makes it amenable to economic investigation and analysis. Instead of attempting to assess in a vacuum the merits of separate and cross-channel ownership, the author deals with more concrete, more verifiable questions: how separate ownership actually affects the economic strength of media, and how it affects competition between them, as regards both price and quality. If economic strength is not seriously undermined, the arguments for cross-channel ownership rest on a false foundation. Levin devotes a substantial part of the book to examination and analysis of the relevant data. With respect to the argument for cross-channel ownership, he concludes that the facts "fail to support the thesis that affiliated media experience such savings in joint production, management and marketing as to facilitate improved service" (p. 98). With respect to the argument against separate ownership, he finds that while there may well be a short-run tendency toward increased sensitivity to pressure groups and a debasement of standards in order to widen audiences, long-run competitive adjustments by the older media frequently "appear to enhance the adequacy of the media as a whole" (p. 168).

It must be pointed out that the data available for analyzing the broad issues that concern Levin are not sufficient to support absolute or airtight conclusions. It is to the author's credit that he is painstakingly scrupulous in refraining from claiming more for his evidence than it allows. Nevertheless, his study justifies the presumption—unless a serious refutation comes along—that the nation would benefit from vigorous pressure for diversification of ownership. The author's final chapter discusses policies for achieving this end.

SAYRE P. SCHATZ

*Hofstra College*

BUCHANAN, JAMES M. *Fiscal Theory and Political Economy: Selected Essays*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1960. 197 pp. \$5.

Public finance is among the oldest subjects studied by political scientists and economists. Yet much of the basic theory of public finance, as Buchanan observes in introducing this collection of eight

of his essays, is still in the early stages of discovery and exploration. The direction taken by most of the traditional work on the subject is increasingly becoming recognized as leading to a dead end. The contributions of modern scholars, on the other hand, rarely go beyond identifying the relevant questions and experimenting with "challenging issues," with the result that, where practical solutions are needed, political and administrative expediency generally continues to rule the policy decisions. This book marks Buchanan as one of the few present-day pathfinders among fiscal economists. It is a valuable work for two main reasons. First, it summarizes and discusses critically the Italian contribution to fiscal theory—"the single most important national body of doctrine which remains largely unknown to and unappreciated by English-language economists." Second, the book is a provocative and, on the whole, encouraging progress report by the author after a decade of serious study of some of the most difficult conceptual and methodological issues of public finance.

Buchanan finds Italian fiscal theory deserving of wider consideration especially because it is strongest in just those areas where Anglo-Saxon theory is weakest. The longest essay, which is one of the two in the book not previously published, presents the results of his intensive research on fiscal theory in Italy, where this subject has been a specialty for at least a century. The author's primary attention is given to the work of Francesco Ferrara, Maffeo Pantaleoni, De Viti De Marco, Enrico Barone, and Luigi Einaudi. In contrast to Anglo-Saxon fiscal theory, which was developed in a partial-equilibrium framework as an adjunct to economic theory, the distinctive merit of these Italian economists is that they conceived fiscal theory in general-equilibrium terms, which forced them to examine the spendings side along with the revenue side. Moreover, the Italian emphasis on the state, rather than the private economy, as the subject of analysis led to concentrated study of the problem of collective decision-making in choosing and financing public goods. De Viti, for example, viewed public services as necessary inputs in the total productive process and imputed to such services an appropriate distributive share. In his conception, "each unit of real income is born with a tax claim against it."

A general theme of several other essays is the contrast between individual behavior in collective and in private economic decision-making. Only in the work in welfare economics does Buchanan find adequate recognition of the importance of this difference. He favors basing the "pure theory of government finance" on an "indi-

vidualistic" theory of the state, which he says is the only appropriate one for democratic societies, as opposed to an "organismic" theory, which the classical economists tended to accept. The remaining essays are for the most part methodological, and reveal the influence of the best of Italian doctrine on Buchanan's thinking about fiscal problems. His analysis of excise-tax incidence is a skillful application of a general-equilibrium approach to problems that until recently were attacked improperly with partial-equilibrium tools. Two other articles analyze the "excess burden" controversy regarding the welfare aspects of income and excise taxes and the choice of appropriate long-run fiscal objectives in a federalism. Perhaps because the exposition is not always lucid, Buchanan sometimes leaves the impression that his methodological principles are unwieldy even in his own expert hands. Therefore, although he has unveiled some new vistas and uncovered old ones for fiscal economists, how many of them can be further explored with profit is an open question.

HASKELL P. WALD

*Graduate Faculty of the New School*

KATONA, GEORGE. *The Powerful Consumer: Psychological Studies of the American Economy*. New York: McGraw-Hill. 1960. ix & 276 pp. \$6.50.

PEI, MARIO. *The Consumer's Manifesto: A Bill of Rights to Protect the Consumer in the Wars Between Capital and Labor*. New York: Crown. 1960. 111 pp. \$2.50.

"Consumers of the World, Arise!" advises Mario Pei, philologist turned pamphleteer, author of the slim polemic, *The Consumer's Manifesto*. At first glance *The Powerful Consumer*, by George Katona, Director of the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center, may seem to be a companion volume to Pei's; it is not. Instead, it is addressed to economic policymakers, and the author's charge to them is "survey." Both writers develop their theses from specific problems in our private market economy, Pei from labor-management disputes and Katona from cyclical fluctuations in economic activity. Both conceive the consumer as a stabilizing force. Pei's book has three main parts: a description of the problem of the consumer as the injured noncombatant in the war between labor and capital; a prescription; and reflections and a blueprint for action. The fourteen chapters of Katona's book are grouped into four parts: the development of a high-income-level economy and the problem of discretionary income; an analysis of consumer attitudes and their

measurement; a survey of general consumer psychology; and consumer psychology under changing economic conditions. These are followed by an appendix on technical aspects of field research and on the Center itself.

Pei's cry for an organized consumer movement to serve as a "third force" between organized labor and organized industry is likely to fall on deaf ears in this country, for much the same reason that the more famous Manifesto foundered here: the people addressed have too much of a stake in what is being condemned. Psychologically, Americans are "producer" and not "consumer" oriented, and hence the subjective element necessary for consumer unity is not present. An objective basis for such a movement is not present either: for example, real disposable personal income per capita increased 26 percent between 1947 and 1959. In such a context, Americans are unlikely to change their behavior patterns, despite the presence of infrequent nationwide strikes, "arrogant labor leaders," and "greedy monopolists." Pei should be aware that consumer movements in this country have not been groundswell operations. Recently established positions of Consumer Counsel in a few state governments have been spawned by professional thinking, not mass command.

Few will quarrel with Katona's contention that "we gain a better understanding of economic processes, and we are able to predict economic processes with greater accuracy, if we make psychological studies of economic behavior in addition to the more traditional financial studies." The work of Katona and his associates, which provides the basis for this book, is widely known, despite his wry observation that he was advised in March 1949 to "save his reputation and refrain from publishing" some of his early findings. The Survey Center's data on consumer expectations are invaluable supplements to Commerce's and others' studies of business investment plans. Katona's present volume reviews this country's postwar cycle history, consumer behavior in the cycles, and the role of the Survey Research Center in plumbing consumer attitudes and plans. He characterizes consumers as inherently conservative, fairly independent and rational in their behavior, and not easily swayed by statements that conflict with their sound if unsophisticated conceptions of the economy. There is a tendency in the book to overstate the importance of aggregate consumer behavior—and it is aggregate behavior under study here, despite the title—but this is forgivable in a work that purports to present "propositions, arguments, and conclusions which are not generally accepted."

Professional economists, especially those in the business-cycle field, are not going to find much new in this summary volume. Katona's empirical work has been in the mainstream that has slowly eroded the original inflexible Keynesian consumption function into a more meaningful although more complicated tool. Economists acknowledge that many factors influence consumption—among them, income, direction of income changes, income anticipations, size of asset holdings, and cultural considerations—and Katona has been providing empirical evidence of this throughout the postwar period. Moreover, in using theory as a foil for the presentation of his findings, Katona lays himself open to a good deal of professional criticism. Is there really a "widely prevailing notion" (pp. 111-12) that consumers spend in prosperous times and stimulate the economy, and save in depressed times and retard the economy? In the light of possible "accelerator" aspects of economic change, is it enough to rest his case for survey work on ability to predict the direction, not the magnitude, of consumer spending shifts? Finally, if a consumer-research program can serve as a cornerstone of an effective business-cycle control policy, one would like to see a prospectus showing the scope and direction of such a program. Why are "consumer attitudes" the heart of the questionnaire rather than "buying plans"? How often should the sample be polled in order to catch the onset of changing plans? Can surveys and findings regarding consumer plans be integrated with surveys and findings regarding business plans?

Katona's book is nevertheless provocative—the chapter on changing consumer attitudes is especially stimulating—and it contains much that is sound. He has well summarized the Center's work over the last decade, and has made a good case for greater attention to consumer behavior. Pei's essay, on the other hand, is likely to be of little value to the professional social scientist.

HAROLD L. WATTEL

*Hofstra College*

BHATT, V. V. *Employment and Capital Formation in Underdeveloped Economies*. Bombay: Orient Longmans. 1960. v & 127 pp. Rs. 10.

The chapters constituting this book appeared in various economic journals between 1952 and 1958. Those articles made a valuable contribution to thinking about underdeveloped countries, and it is therefore a great convenience to have them brought together in one volume.

The author's concern with questions of industrial technology and employment forms a general connecting thread, and there is an introduction linking the parts together, as well as some measure of cross references. It must be said, however, that, even so, this book does not make a fully connected whole, and should be treated more as a series of readings. Another general drawback is that it largely reflects work done at Harvard about ten years ago, and has not been brought up to date, except for very occasional footnote references; as a result it makes a somewhat faded impression. Perhaps Dr. Bhatt's present duties as a senior official in the Reserve Bank of India did not permit him to rewrite his book in the light of more recent literature. But the fact is that in the past decade there has been a great deal of further thinking on these matters, development of techniques of analysis, and new statistical evidence. For instance, in a book that has as one of its key themes the problem of unemployment and underemployment, it is a pity that no account is taken of Professor Arthur Lewis' work on economic development with unlimited supplies of labor. This would apply also to the work of Tinbergen, Leibenstein, and Chenery. None of these authors is even mentioned.

On the other hand, the book has the virtue of its defect in that it faithfully mirrors the state of thinking on problems in underdeveloped countries in the early 1950s. It is interesting to note, for example, that the author, in line with classical teaching, expected the capital-output ratio to be more favorable in underdeveloped than in developed countries, and how surprised he is to find that statistically this does not seem to be the case. Not only have we learned to live with this now familiar fact, but we are trying to find ways of dealing with it more operationally. One of the main merits of the book is that it brings out the need for a technology adapted to the resource endowment of the underdeveloped countries. But here again Dr. Bhatt carries with him the eggshells of earlier thinking, for he calls this required new technology "intermediate" between ancient handicrafts and modern industrial technology (p. 72).

Other details in the book could be picked out for praise or criticism. Perhaps the main point of criticism, at least to this reviewer, is Dr. Bhatt's optimism concerning employment. He assumes that if only aggregate output could be increased by 4 percent per annum—that is, per capita output by 2 percent per annum—employment would increase in the same proportion; underemployment, which he estimates at 25 percent (with India in mind), would thus be wiped out in twelve years. Although Dr. Bhatt is careful to stress that his approach

is that of a theoretical model-builder, and not operational, it must be pointed out that while aggregate output in the underdeveloped countries may have increased in the 1950s by 4 percent per annum, or not much less, unemployment and underemployment seem to have increased rather than diminished. While models can be non-operational, perhaps they should not be so to such a startling degree.

H. W. SINGER

*United Nations*

BERNSTEIN, IRVING. *The Lean Years: A History of the American Worker, 1920-1933*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. 1960. xi & 577 pp. \$7.

"Being a proletarian in good standing," Heywood Broun noted laconically, "is no bed of roses." *The Lean Years* corroborates the proposition. It is a thoroughly documented chronicle of the situation of the American worker between 1920 and 1933, describing with precision and sympathy his income, his health, his family, his union. The breakdown of unionism, the antipathy of the courts, and governmental exercises in self-deception are all here. So are the futility of discontent and the early well intentioned but ineffective fumbling with relief. There is little doubt about how the author perceives the period or where his feelings lie. But there is no maudling, no overstatement, only accurate and detailed chronicling in straightforward good prose.

Bernstein sets out to "break with the tradition that has dominated the writing of American labor history." To free himself from the traditional mold, which concentrates on the rise of the trade unions and their place in the market and in the social structure, he intends to "begin with the worker rather than with the trade union." By page 4, however, the union is in the story, and in conception and content the book does not differ substantially from the work of other labor historians, though it includes a welcome chapter on the introduction of employee-representation plans and another on the "Bonus Army." Bernstein is preeminently concerned with the unemployed workers, and with those who sneak into the chronicle because they tried to do something about their wages or their jobs. It could not be otherwise. The conditions of the employed majority would not fit in this book, because for the workers who managed to stay employed these were not lean years.

In spite of the attention that political histories of the period have given the depression years, there has been no important work on the

depression since Frederick Lewis Allen's *Only Yesterday*. While Bernstein's work is not the definitive history, since for that it includes too much description and too little interpretation, it is an important contribution. It will facilitate the teaching of social history and help place the depression years in proper perspective.

OSCAR ORNATI

*Graduate Faculty of the New School*

FOGEL, ROBERT WILLIAM. *The Union Pacific Railroad: A Case in Premature Enterprise*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press. 1960. 129 pp. \$3.50.

This intriguing monograph presents new facets of the construction of the Union Pacific Railroad, usually dealt with by historians only because of the Credit Mobilier scandal. It was clearly in the national interest that a railroad linking the west coast with the rest of the country should be built. But the vast distance and the difficult terrain made private initiative too timid to undertake it—it was a premature enterprise. The project was batted around in Congress for years, not because of opposition to government participation, for that was deemed essential, but because of disagreement as to the conditions of government participation. Finally the terms were set: a private corporation, assisted by government land grants and government loans. But these benefits were harvested only gradually as given amounts of track were completed. From the first the builders were crippled by shortage of working capital; stocks and bonds sold with difficulty far below par, and money had to be borrowed at exorbitant interest rates. At last the speed of construction—to snatch as much government largess as possible from the Central Pacific—boosted the reputation of the road as a profitable venture, and financing became easy. But the earlier difficulty had left the road fatally burdened with debt. The revelation of the Credit Mobilier scandal dealt it a body blow, and it finally staggered into receivership in 1893.

The author does not condone the promoters' action in sucking the lifeblood out of the Union Pacific through its construction company, the Credit Mobilier. But he points out that almost everyone, both in finance and in government, thought such a railroad would never earn a reasonable rate of return on the investment. This accounts for its trouble in borrowing. Had the government, with its high credit standing, completely financed its construction, it might have developed a negotiable debt structure. The author calculates that

during the 1870s the rate of return on the cost of construction, in constant 1869 dollars, averaged more than 11 percent, and hence, despite current opinion, the road was basically a profitable venture. Besides, the social rate of return, as estimated only in part by increased income from land development, was very large. Thus, ironically, the Union Pacific was a sound private investment, an excellent public investment, and not a premature enterprise after all.

This is an ingeniously reasoned and also a very well written book. The author's analysis of the nature of the risk to private capitalists, and his use of rent theory in the partial estimate of the social rate of return of the railroad, constitute a brave leap across the chasm that lies between economic history and economic analysis.

FELICIA J. DEYRUP

*Graduate Faculty of the New School*

BOYD, JULIAN P., ed. *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, vols. 7-15. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1953-58. \$10.00 each vol.

In the nineteenth century Germany produced the *Monumenta*; England, the Rolls Series. In the twentieth century the United States has introduced its own characteristic contribution to research, the exhaustive publication of the letters and other surviving literary remains of important historical figures. Yale has published the Walpole letters in staggering volume, and is now bringing out Franklin; Princeton is editing Jefferson; Columbia will publish Hamilton. These sources have more than biographical interest: they yield important data on cultural and intellectual history, and contribute new information on past events. In all cases the editorial work displays the highest degree of insight and meets the most exacting standards of scholarship.

The Jefferson papers will run to fifty-two volumes. The first forty will contain the 18,000 letters written by Jefferson and also, in full or in summary, more than 25,000 letters written to him; certain documents appropriate for chronological ordering are included in this series. The second series will consist of ten volumes of writings and records susceptible of topical arrangement. A biographical register of the correspondents and an index will conclude the work.

The volumes under review cover the years March 1784 through November 1789, thus embracing the entire period of Jefferson's service in France, first as plenipotentiary representative to negotiate treaties of commerce and then as resident minister in succession to Franklin. Volume 15 also prints more than a hundred recently discovered documents dating back to 1772. Each volume contains a number of

illustrations. Scattered through the volumes are reports and drafts by Jefferson on public topics. An extremely useful feature is the Editorial Notes prefatory to collections of documents on particular topics. Especially interesting is that on "The Earth Belongs to the Living" (xv, 384), in which a characteristic Jeffersonian doctrine is traced to its source and for the first time given its full significance.

These volumes contain valuable letters by Jefferson and his correspondents on the problems of the Confederation and the new constitution; they follow out the emergence of the French Revolution and describe Jefferson's rather indiscreet involvement in French politics. Some of the political opinions expressed by Jefferson in the 1780s are startling. In 1786 he proposed to John Adams that the United States raise a navy rather than buy off the Barbary states, not only in order to solve the immediate problem but to "arm the federal head with the safest of all instruments of coercion over their delinquent members and prevent them from using what would be less safe" (x, 123). At this time Jefferson was much concerned to maintain national authority: to this end he proposed that the national judiciary be given power in the new constitution to hear appeals in cases of state action conflicting with the "act of Confederation" (xi, 481). He also desired that "a peaceable mode of compulsion over the states" be given to the Congress (xi, 34). On the other hand, one of his arguments for a declaration of rights was that such a statement would be a test by which the states might "try all the acts of the federal government" (xiv, 660). A declaration of rights was useful also because it put a legal check in the hands of the judiciary (xiv, 658). He took judicial review for granted in states that had genuine constitutions; in Virginia, however, a great part of the population considered the constitution a mere legislative enactment (x, 18). He had no great confidence in direct popular election. A popular house in the Congress would be necessary, because the Union would have taxing power; but it would be ill qualified to legislate (xii, 439). "The tyranny of the legislatures is the most formidable dread at present" (xiv, 661). In fact, jury trial was more important than popular representation in the legislature (xv, 283). Always on the minds of Jefferson and his correspondents was the political problem of the Mississippi.

Those persons who regard John Adams as a conservative will be surprised to learn that he was apprehensive of the Senate as an aristocratic body (xii, 396), and that he was of the number of those "who have the Cause of Humanity, Equity, Equality and Liberty at heart" (xii, 414).

Much of Jefferson's correspondence was concerned with business—attempts to secure favorable terms for the admission of whale oil and tobacco into France, the affairs of distressed Americans, the plight of captives in Algeria. His interest in the practical arts is attested by innumerable letters on thermometers and hygrometers, architecture, canals, harpsichords, plows, James Rumsey's plan for a steamship, Tom Paine's iron bridge, the making of macaroni, and the beating of rice. He found a workingman who made muskets with interchangeable parts, and sent six specimens to Henry Knox (xv, 422). A number of letters deal with science, natural history, and anthropology.

The letters give a full portrait of the mind not only of Jefferson but of the Enlightenment. They bring the fresh air of the age of rationalism and optimism.

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STOLPER, TONI. *Ein Leben in Brennpunkten unserer Zeit: Wien, Berlin, New York—Gustav Stolper, 1888–1947.* Tübingen: Rainer Wunderlich Verlag Hermann Leins. 1960. 502 pp. DM28.50.

In relating the story of Gustav Stolper, his wife has achieved three things. She has erected a monument to a man whose keen power of observation and analysis, whose vigor, initiative, and facility of expression, lifted him early in life to positions of influence on the commentator's side of current events, and held him there, first in Austria, from about 1911 to 1925, next in Germany, to 1933, and finally, from 1933 to his death (1947), in the United States. Secondly, she has recalled to vibrant life many significant situations in the political, economic, and social history of our century, because she could draw on what Gustav Stolper wrote on them then and there, in almost weekly reports, critical articles, and discerning notes. And thirdly, in presenting the first important biographical document testifying to the high intellectual, moral, and creative faculties that could be found among the refugees from the Hitler regime, Mrs. Stolper has wrought a wreath to the immigration as a whole. In other words, her book has biographical, historical, and sociological value.

Growing up in Vienna, Stolper received his doctorate at twenty-two and, that young, became an associate editor of the Austrian *Volkswirt*, respected economic weekly. Here he developed his independent style of thinking and writing, from the outset deeply concerned with the political as well as the economic aspects of events, for he early rec-

ognized that the *ends* of social life are determined by politics, not by economics. Politically he followed the line that earlier and more active attempts to meet the aspirations for greater autonomy of the various nations that composed the Austrian realm would have had better results than were being achieved by anxious preservation of the status quo tempered by feeble attempts at assimilation and frequently degenerating into a mere drifting. He saw the immediate causes of World War I in the political incompetence of the Austrian government and in the failure of the German government to understand the real reasons for Austria's inner troubles. He hoped for a union between Austria and Germany. These views and his fundamentally democratic ideals established early friendships with men like Friedrich Naumann and Theodor Heuss.

The collapse of all he had stood for in Austria and the narrowing of the horizon open for his talents in Vienna led Stolper to the decision to move to Berlin, in 1925, determined to found a German *Volkswirt* there. The story of how he succeeded singlehandedly, and of the final triumph when his *Volkswirt* became the most important economic weekly published on the Continent, makes fascinating reading.

With Hitler's access to power the Stolpers had to flee. His first bold idea was to found another *Volkswirt* in New York, but he knew that his lack of familiarity with the American scene, quite apart from the financial problems, would make such an achievement impossible. So he prepared for his immigration by winning a small number of influential European bankers to engage his services for frequent reports on American and world economics. These reports proved so informative that the number of firms that wanted them grew rapidly, and the income flowing from this source made Stolper financially independent. He resolutely embraced the new world as his own. Rapid assimilation was natural to him, because his ideals and ends had always been in line with American ideals and ends, at least in politics and economics (culturally he remained a European). But he preserved, and never hesitated to show, deep loyalty to companions of earlier days and his love of Germany minus the Nazis.

After World War II the Hoover mission took Stolper back to Europe. His knowledge of political and economic conditions gave him paramount authority in influencing Hoover's report, large parts of which Stolper drafted. He deserves a major part of the credit for the turn in United States official policy from paralyzing vindictive tendencies to the more dynamic approach adopted thereafter.

There is a short section in this volume the like of which one would

hardly find in any other book now—a praise of life in the Weimar Republic, subtitled *Lob von Weimar*. From the 350 issues of the German *Volkswirt* from 1925 to 1933, Toni Stolper writes, there rises a story of the Weimar Republic as it has never been written, and perhaps never will be, for it has become fashionable to refer to the first German republic with contempt, because of its final failure. "Yet Stolper, his associates, his friends, many readers, and millions of Germans experienced that time in a different manner. We were passionately engrossed with its breadth, its possibilities." It was "not only miserable, confused, but also brilliant, pregnant with the future." The historians have as yet communicated little of this spirit, she rightly complains; their writings suffer from foreknowledge of the end, inferring as certain what was being determined only gradually (pp. 211-13).

Written with competence, honesty, tact, clarity of style, and sense of drama, this book stands out as a remarkable contribution to the history of our time. Few are the biographies in which current opinions freely expressed, from the era before World War I to after World War II, bear quotation so well as in this of Gustav Stolper.

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GOTTLIEB, MANUEL. *The German Peace Settlement and the Berlin Crisis*. New York: Paine-Whitman. 1960. xx & 275 pp. \$8.50.

The author's main thesis is twofold: that the reparations question played a decisive role in preventing a settled agreement for a unified Germany; and that the Soviet occupation authorities, in cooperation with their East German allies, aimed at and laid the groundwork for a Germany that would be unified, liberal, and democratic. In pursuing this line of argument Mr. Gottlieb, an economist formerly attached to OMGUS, loses sight entirely of the wider historical and political framework within which the German problem was being discussed. Though he initially recognizes that local policy decisions and global strategy are "organic and dynamic" (p. ix), he again and again adopts "an economic interpretation of the German problem": if only agreement on economic questions had been reached in time (on reparations from current production, currency reform, and the like), institutional devices knitting Germany into a single economic and political unit would necessarily have been created. That these agreements were not reached in time he blames exclusively on the Western powers' ambivalence and drift.

It would take a professional economist (which this reviewer is not)

to evaluate the complex, tangled—and chaotically presented—evidence with which Mr. Gottlieb attempts to support his argument. But his contention that a united German economy, kept at a level of production agreed on by the Allies, could easily have met the demand for 20 billion dollars in reparation payments fails to carry conviction. Furthermore, his main thesis appears to be contradicted by his own evidence. Thus agreements on economic policies were often, if belatedly, reached (for example, on the level of industry, on currency reform, on currency printing, pp. 113, 121, 124), only to break down for political reasons when implementation was attempted.

Skepticism in regard to the economic side of the argument is reinforced by the impression of naivete and frequently open bias which is conveyed when the political aspects of the problem are under discussion. In the present work Mr. Gottlieb admittedly fights again battles in which he found himself embroiled when attached to OMGUS after 1945. Unfortunately, in spite of his disclaimer (p. xiii), he has not been able to shift the focus of his writing away from preoccupation with "the shortcomings of American policy." And thus we are given a barbed critique of Western sins of omission and commission, while the Soviet Union and its East German satellite are extended the benefit of every doubt. To cite but a few examples, the transformation of the Soviet occupation zone into a communist-controlled "people's democracy" is presented as a largely spontaneous attempt by anti-Nazi Germans to democratize, liberalize, and economically restore the East zone. The communist insistence on a "bloc" of all "anti-fascist" parties is accepted as fully justified; the forced merger of the KPD and the SPD is condoned as meeting the desires of "Left Socialists" (Grotewohl being used as evidence!). And the KPD is credited with a sincere conversion to the desirability of building a "radical democratic republic in company with social democratic and bourgeois liberals" (p. 39). This interpretation is supported, with involuntary irony, by citing the application of "new democracy" to China, the Balkans, and Central Europe (p. 50).

Reluctance to accept Mr. Gottlieb's line of reasoning is increased by the obvious and annoying lack of care with which this book has been prepared. Though the work addresses itself to an important question and makes extensive use of sources that are difficult of access, its carelessness and imbalance force one to discount it as a serious scholarly contribution.

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WEIL, BRUNO. *Der Prozess des Hauptmanns Dreyfus.* Düsseldorf: Allgemeine Wochenzeitung der Juden in Deutschland. 1960. 272 pp.

In 1935 Léon Blum, writing his *Souvenirs sur l'Affaire*, stated his bewilderment at his son's lack of interest in the Dreyfus case, which had impassioned him and so many others in their youth. Now, a quarter of a century later, the number of French books dealing with the case and seeking to determine its significance for the evolution of the Third Republic and contemporary France has grown to considerable proportions—the most important of the recent works being that of Professor Maurice Baumont of the Sorbonne (1960). The vicissitudes of recent French history, the role of the army in French politics, and the clashes between French social forces are largely responsible for the revival of French interest in the trial and sentencing, the martyrdom and rehabilitation of Captain Dreyfus, the first officer of Jewish origin to enter the French General Staff. But though it is perfectly clear why French writers and the French public are deeply concerned with this essentially French affair and its repercussions on European relations and on the history of the Jewish people, the apparently complete lack of present-day German interest in the case is striking. Bruno Weil's book on Dreyfus, the best written in the German language, first appeared under the imprint of a well known German publishing house, but the present new and expanded edition was published by a periodical devoted exclusively to the interests of the about 30,000 Jews who still reside in Germany.

Weil, a distinguished lawyer and publicist, believes, as does Baumont, that many highly placed persons' responsibilities for the case and its development are shrouded in secrecy, and will probably remain so, since the records of the French and German General Staffs have been destroyed or lost. He is concerned mainly with restating the facts and intrigues that led to the sentencing of an innocent man, with the rise and virulence of anti-Semitic feelings in France, and with the legal and human aspects of the case, which he has studied more carefully than the historians. Yet Weil does not neglect the political and diplomatic aspects. In this new edition he could make use of sources not yet accessible thirty years ago, including newly published notes of the German Emperor William II and, more particularly, the diary of the French diplomatist Maurice Paléologue, who represented the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the trial before the Cour de Cassation and the Military Tribunal of Rennes. Like the French authors, Weil shows much circumspection

in the use of this source, because of Paléologue's well known unreliability. In exploring the official German attitude the author exposes the cynicism of the then Secretary of State and later Chancellor, Bernhard von Bülow, who, knowing the full truth, stopped short of revealing it convincingly: "it is not desirable that by a speedy and clear vindication of Dreyfus France immediately regains liberal and Jewish sympathies; it is best to let the affair continue to simmer, to disintegrate the [French] army, and to scandalize Europe." Similar instructions handed down by Bülow to the officials of the Foreign Office are quoted by Baumont.

In 1930, when the Nazi flood started engulfing the German people, Weil drew consolation from the outcome of the Dreyfus case: to him it indicated that anti-Semitism was a passing phenomenon. Today, after the catastrophe brought over European Jewry by victorious National Socialism, these lines are tragically lacking from his book.

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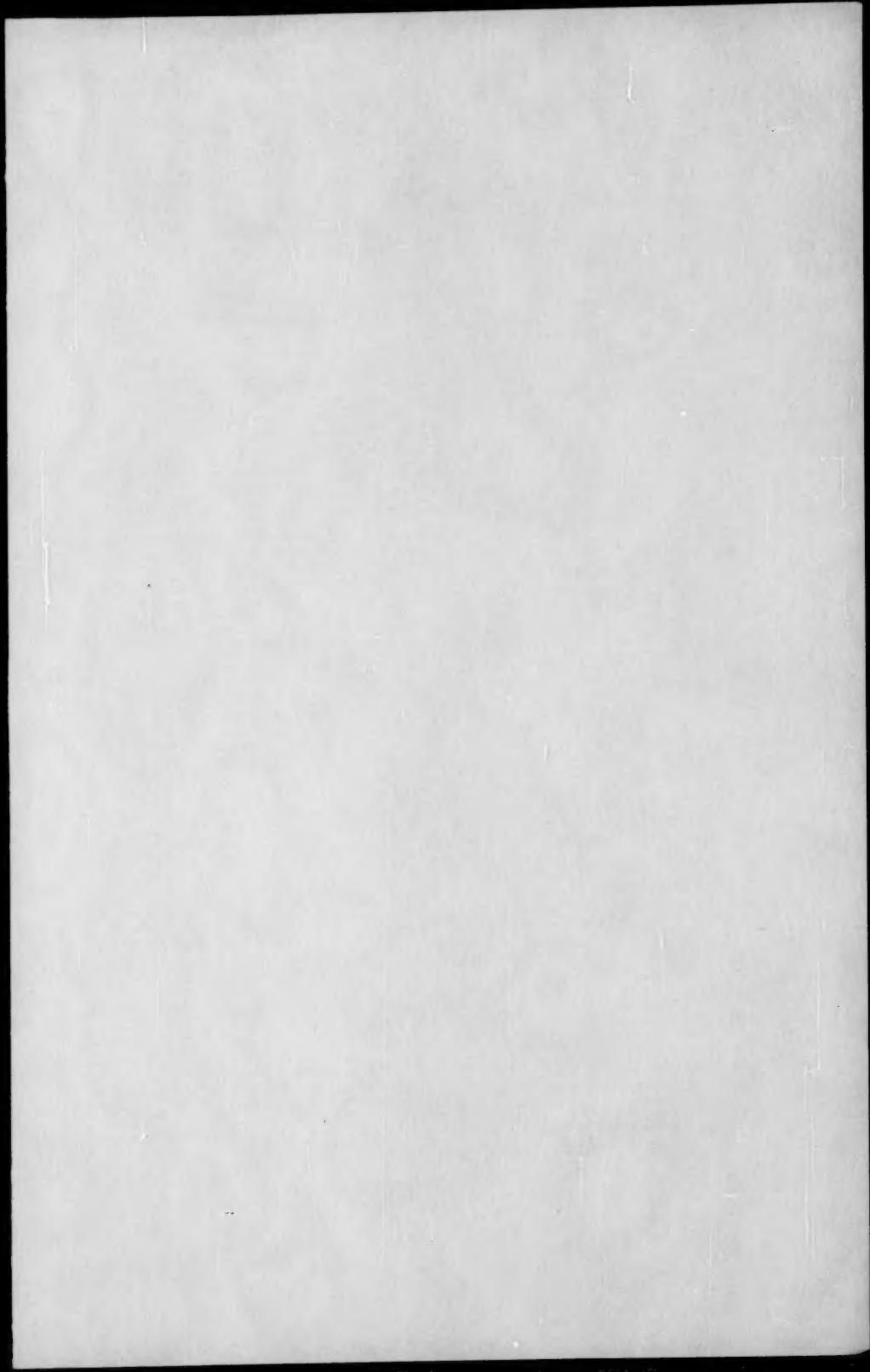
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